

CROMWELLIANA 2013

Series III No 2

Editor: Dr Maxine Forshaw

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ISBN 0-905729-29-3

EDITOR'S NOTE

2012 marked the 75th anniversary of the Cromwell Association and, accordingly, this edition of the journal of the Association acknowledges this event. Blair Worden celebrated the anniversary in his Cromwell Day address. The study day held in October 2012 'Cromwell and the Historians, 1937-2012' looked at the development of studies of Cromwell over the period and the papers presented are included here. These cover diverse topics such as the editors of Cromwell's letters and speeches, historians' views of Cromwell since 1937, the activities of the Association and its presidents, and the memorials erected at Cromwellian sites both by the Association and others.

This edition also includes a Cromwell Collection Lecture presented by David L. Smith; and Peter Gaunt sheds new light on the interaction between Cromwell and the officers in 1657.

My thanks to all the contributors for their valuable input to this edition.

The cover illustration shows the newly restored monument at the Marston Moor battlefield in North Yorkshire, where the 2013 AGM of the Association was held in April.

CROMWELL DAY ADDRESS 2012:
CROMWELL ASSOCIATION 75th ANNIVERSARY

By Prof Blair Worden

This year is the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Cromwell Association. The year of the foundation, 1937, also marked the appearance of the first of the four volumes of W.C. Abbott's edition of Cromwell's writings and speeches, that indispensable aid, despite its shortcomings, to subsequent students of Cromwell and especially of the protectorate. Eight years earlier, in 1929, Abbott had published his bibliography of Cromwell, which listed more than 2500 publications concerning him since his death. 'It seems', Abbott then wrote, 'an appropriate time to issue such a work as this', for 'the stream of Cromwellian literature' which had swelled 'so greatly in the nineteenth' century has 'shrunk so much in the last few years that it is perhaps fair to assume that the great bulk of such literature has appeared. As we shall probably not learn much more about the protector than we know now, so we shall almost certainly never see again an amount of publication regarding him comparable in either extent or value to the material', which Abbott had listed.

At least as far as the 'extent' of publication was concerned, he had reckoned without the subsequent expansion of the academic community and its itch for publication. But he was right that the great age of interest in Cromwell was over. The cult of Cromwell headed by Thomas Carlyle and his philosophy of hero-worship in the 1840s, and complemented towards the century's end by the high scholarship of S.R. Gardiner and C.H. Firth, had dwindled since the passing of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1934, F.H. Hayward, who would be a prominent figure in the Association, complained in his book *The Unknown Cromwell* that leading works about him, Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches* among them, were out of print or at least hard to obtain. The age of the dictators of the 1930s did, it is true, produce a revival of interest of a kind. When, in the last of Abbott's four volumes, published in 1947 soon after his death, he brought his bibliographical essay of 1929 up to date, he declared it 'no mere accident that the past dozen years have seen an extraordinary number of books and articles about Cromwell in German', or that 'perhaps for the first time there have been such contributions in Russia'. In Britain, however, while such analogies brought Cromwell's name before the public, they contradicted the traditional image of him as a friend to liberty. It was in a troubled spirit that in the year of the formation of the Association, Maurice Ashley, a future Chairman of it, described Cromwell as a 'conservative dictator', and that Ernest Barker, who would soon have a

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conspicuous role in the Association, drew comparisons between the Independents and the Nazis. Hayward's book had protested against such analogies. Among a wider public they helped to prolong that demonic image of Cromwell which had predominated before the Victorian age, and which had persisted despite the swing in the balance of opinion in Cromwell's favour during the nineteenth century. It is not dead even now.

So when the Association was founded, Cromwellianism was on the defensive. The impulse of the new body was preservative and protective. Its stated object was 'the perpetuation of the memory of Oliver Cromwell': a memory under threat. In its first twenty years or so the Association discussed proposals for a new edition of Cromwell's letters and for other publications which might 'overcome the widespread prejudice against Cromwell' and 'confute the misrepresentations of prejudiced partisans'. It had been Carlyle's mission to contend against them too. Now his victory had apparently been reversed. But there was none of Carlyle's belligerence about the Association, whose founding resolution pledged it to be 'non-sectarian and non-political'. Much of the energy of the Association in its earlier years went into the creation or restoration of tablets and other memorials in recognition, but not provocatively worded recognition, of the despised or neglected Cromwell. The Association suffered defeats at the hands of the prejudice against which it protested. It learned with 'much astonishment' of the refusal of the parish council of Putney to allow a printed record of the debates held there in 1647 to be made available in the church porch, and was dismayed to hear of the refusal by Cambridge Borough Council 'to commemorate the Borough's most famous member of parliament'.

The Victorian cult of Cromwell had had three main aspects. There was Cromwell the champion of England's greatness and of its military and naval power. That image of him had flourished since the reign of Charles II and had prospered in sections of society which radically disapproved of him in other ways. The nineteenth century made him a pioneer of the British Empire, which could be said to date from his acquisition of Jamaica in 1655. The other strands of Cromwellianism, one political, one religious (though the two largely intertwined), made him the friend not so much of England as of the other England, of the persecuted or downtrodden or of earnest, upright, manly classes oppressed by a corrupt and effete aristocracy or

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contending for religious liberty against a bigoted ecclesiastical establishment. In religion Cromwell was the hero of Nonconformity. In politics he was the hero both of Liberalism, that political partner of Nonconformity, and of Chartists and republicans and socialists. The three strands came together at the summit of Cromwellianism, the tercentenary celebrations of 1899, when he was widely hailed as the greatest figure in our, and perhaps anyone's, history; when the half-century old campaign for a statue of him at Westminster finally prevailed; and when, in the City Temple in Holborn, where the Association is to hold a study day next month, more than 3000 people, many of whom had travelled far on foot, attended a series of meetings from noon till night after hundreds had had to be turned away.

Isaac Foot, the first Chairman of the Association, was nineteen at the time of the tercentenary. He made a famous remark about the civil war which is often misremembered. 'He would judge a man by one thing', he said: not which side the man would say he would have fought on at Marston Moor – for it is meaningless to ask inhabitants of one age how they would have felt or acted in another – but 'which side he would have liked his ancestors to have fought on at Marston Moor'. Cromwellianism had always been an ancestral force. In 1848, the year of European revolutions, the reformer Joshua Toulmin Smith told Robert Owen, the great socialist and philanthropist, that 'two centuries ago, when the friends of reform had to show their earnestness by going forth with harness on their backs, my fathers fought for reform, and for civil and religious liberty'. Smith's own grandfather had written in the same tradition. More often the sense of lineal descent has been one of ideology rather than of family. In the nineteenth century the linear sense was strongest among Nonconformists who saw themselves as heirs of seventeenth-century Puritanism and its successor eighteenth-century Dissent. In its twentieth-century form it can be glimpsed, in a more secular form, in the title of Christopher Hill's and Edmund Dell's book of 1949 *The Good Old Cause*.

In Isaac Foot the three strands of Cromwellianism came together. Zealous for British sea-power and a devotee of Admiral Blake, he warmed to Cromwell's achievements abroad. He proclaimed Cromwell to have been a friend both to 'English liberty' and to 'parliamentary government'. But his essential bond with Cromwell seems to have been spiritual. He saw Cromwell and his other hero, Abraham Lincoln, as men 'prepared and fitted

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to meet the challenge of their day which they could only ignore at the peril of their souls'. In the year the Association was founded, Foot became vice-president of the Methodist Conference. He was also president of the National Sunday School Union. But he was all too conscious of the decline of Nonconformity, the strongest of the foundations of Cromwellianism. 'Are we sufficiently aware', he wrote, 'of the decline of our Free Churchmanship?' And how, he asked, could the falling away of bible-reading and biblical knowledge in England's homes be reversed? The other pillars of Cromwellianism were eroding too. The year of Abbott's bibliography, 1929, was the time when the reaction against the slaughter of the Great War began to damage the esteem of military glory, and when the Great Slump undermined the national confidence that had rejoiced in the achievements of Empire. It also saw the formation of the second government headed by the Labour Party, which had risen at the expense of the Liberals. Cromwellian Liberalism had been a broad church, which until the 1890s had managed to accommodate both middle-class and working-class sentiment and both moderate and radical programmes. But from that decade on Cromwell began to appear in a new and less flattering light. Hitherto he had stood for both middle-class and working-class aspirations. Now radicals discovered the Levellers and assailed Cromwell's suppression of them. A fly on the wall of the Foots' home, where there were twenty or thirty busts of Cromwell, might have enjoyed the arguments about the Levellers, recalled, but alas not described, by Isaac's son, the future Labour leader Michael Foot, between himself and his father.

Perhaps we should regret the decline of Cromwellian ardour. Yet the Victorian cult of Cromwell used history, as on a smaller scale the twentieth-century cult of the Levellers has done, for its own purposes, in either congratulating or reproaching the past according to its capacity or incapacity to conform to modern values. Liberals and Nonconformists projected their own image on to the seventeenth century and in the process distorted it. The idea that Cromwell, whose army broke up parliaments when they would not do its bidding, was the friend of democracy, lives on. Whenever – as in the case of the recent MP's expenses scandal – some crisis of parliamentary authority arises, the newspapers publish letters invoking words which Cromwell is said to have used when dissolving the Long Parliament in 1653, but which were fabricated for a political purpose more than a century later. The Nonconformists' Cromwell was closer to truth, since it at least

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identified his programme of godliness as the animating impulse of his career. But it too rewrote that programme by its own lights, substituting moral earnestness for his theological conviction, and mistaking his desire for a broad Puritan church for a precocious version of the Victorian ideal of religious toleration.

The Cromwell Association provides a forum, of which there are too few, for the interchange of professional or academic history with lay historical interests. The Association was not founded by academic historians, but in recent times it has been headed by them. On the whole, today's academics do not like heroes. They like to bring them down to earth, to expose their frailties and inconsistencies or their opportunism or self-interest, or to show that apparently idealistic men were, at heart, politicians like any other. Perhaps there is a risk that the fire in Cromwell's belly, and the reasons for the might of his impact on his age and for the emotions he generated, will be obscured in consequence. But at least the Association is not in thrall to anachronistic enthusiasms. It studies Cromwell not, or anyway not primarily, as a role model but because he is interesting and because of his part in a major episode in our history. If there is a threat to the comprehension of him now, it comes not so much from the prejudice and partisanship of which the founders of the Association were conscious, as from the narrowing of historical knowledge in our schools and in public debate. The stated aim of the Association now is 'to advance the education of the public' in his 'life and legacy' and to promote an understanding of 'the wider history of the seventeenth century'. May it continue to prosper in that endeavour.

This Cromwell Day address was given on 3 September 2012.

Blair Worden is a vice president of the Cromwell Association. His books include *The Rump Parliament 1648-1653*; *Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity*; *The English Civil Wars 1640-1660*; *Literature and Politics in Cromwellian England*; and *God's Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell*.

OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD

By Dr David L. Smith

I

On 21 April 1657, in one of the speeches to Parliament's representatives in which he meditated on their offer of the kingship, Oliver Cromwell offered these words of praise for those who had framed the Humble Petition and Advice: 'I think you have provided for the liberty of the people of God, and for the liberty of the nation. And I say he sings sweetly that sings a song of reconciliation betwixt these two interests! And it is a pitiful fancy, and wild and ignorant to think they are inconsistent. Certainly they may consist!'¹ This was a highly revealing passage, for it reflected a profound tension within Cromwell's thinking between two conceptions of the people of God: firstly, the belief that the English were an Elect nation, a chosen people; and secondly, the desire to liberate and protect those godly people who as yet comprised only a minority within England. In this lecture I want to explore how, throughout Cromwell's career, despite his persistent attempts to reconcile these two imperatives, they remained distinct, separable and to some extent contradictory.

II

Cromwell had a vision of England as an Elect nation, analogous to the people of Israel in the Old Testament. He expressed this very vividly in the opening paragraph of a Declaration as Lord Protector issued on 9 May 1654:

That this hath been a nation of blessings in the midst whereof so many wonders have been brought forth by the outstretched arm of the Almighty, even to astonishment, and wonder, who can deny? Ask we the nations of this matter and they will testify, and indeed the dispensations of the Lord have been as if he had said, England thou art my first-born, my delight amongst the nations, under the whole heavens the Lord hath not dealt so with any of the people round about us.²

Early the following year, on 22 January 1655, he told the first Protectorate Parliament: 'I look at the people of these nations as the blessing of the Lord; and they are a people blessed by God.'³ In Calvinist terms, this meant that membership of God's Elect could apply to nations as well as to individuals. For, as Cromwell told the second sitting of the second Protectorate

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Parliament three years later, ‘As God pardoneth the man whom He justifieth ... sometimes God pardoneth nations also’. Cromwell believed that the course of England’s history from the Reformation onwards pointed to her special destiny as an Elect nation:

Truly I hope this is His land: and in some sense it may be given out that it is God’s land. And He that hath the weakest knowledge and the worst memory can easily tell that we are a redeemed people. We were a redeemed people, when first God was pleased to look favourably upon us, and to bring us out of the hands of Popery in that never-to-be-forgotten reformation, that most significant and greatest the nation hath felt or tasted.

England’s redemption was ‘comprehensive of all the interest of every member, of every individual of these nations’.⁴

Yet Cromwell also associated the idea of God’s people with that godly minority of whom he clearly saw himself as one. He did not identify this minority with any particular denomination or sect, but instead believed – unusually for the godly in early-modern England – that those whom he called ‘God’s children’ were scattered among a number of different churches. On 6 November 1648, he wrote to Colonel Robert Hammond that he prayed and ‘waited for the day to see union and right understanding between the godly people (Scots, English, Jews, Gentiles, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and all)’.⁵ Later, in his opening address to Barebone’s Parliament, he condemned the Rump for not intending good ‘to the people of God – I mean, when I say so, that large comprehension of them under the several forms of godliness in this nation; ... all tenderness was forgotten to the good people’.⁶ He devoutly wished to see these ‘several forms of godliness’ enjoying liberty of conscience and co-existing peacefully with each other.

This duality in Cromwell’s thinking reflected a central paradox that he never succeeded in resolving. He hoped that the interests of the godly minority, and of England as an Elect nation, might be reconciled, and he regularly affirmed his conviction that this could indeed be achieved. He commended the Instrument of Government to the first Protectorate Parliament as a constitution ‘wherein I dare assert there is a just liberty to the people of

God, and the just rights of the people in these nations provided for'.⁷ He asserted that he did not wish to remain Lord Protector 'an hour longer than I may preserve England in its just rights, and may protect the people of God in such a just liberty of their consciences'.⁸ Later, in his speech on 3 April 1657 to representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, he made a similar point in relation to the Humble Petition and Advice:

If anyone whatsoever think the interest of Christians and the interest of the nation inconsistent, or two different things, I wish my soul may never enter into their secrets...And upon these two interests, if God shall account me worthy, I shall live and die. And ... if I were to give an account before a greater tribunal than any earthly one; and if I were asked why I have engaged all along in the late war, I could give no answer but it would be a wicked one if it did not comprehend these two ends.⁹

Yet, in a nation where evangelical Puritanism advanced only patchily at best during the 1650s and where, by the time of Cromwell's death, many parishes were still using all or parts of the old Prayer Book, it proved extraordinarily difficult to bring those two ends together.¹⁰

These tensions within Cromwell's thinking about God's people need to be set within a wider intellectual framework, for they were in part a consequence of the particular way in which Calvinist thought had developed in England during the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. From the reign of Elizabeth I onwards, it was highly characteristic of English national identity to apply the Calvinist doctrine of the Elect to the whole nation, thereby creating the idea of an Elect nation that had withstood the threat from international Catholicism led by Spain.¹¹ A similar pattern of belief also emerged in the Dutch Republic, the only other major Western European state in which Calvinists formed more than a minority of the inhabitants.¹² This in turn generated a problem: were the Elect those who felt a sense of assurance that they were among God's saints; or were they all members of the Elect nation? This was an issue with which Cromwell wrestled throughout his career, but never succeeded in resolving. His speeches to Parliaments constantly assumed that the two were compatible and would ultimately be reconciled, but he recognised that this could not be

other than a very difficult and indeed painful process. As he put it in his opening address to the first Protectorate Parliament on 4 September 1654:

These are but entrances and doors of hope, wherein through the blessing of God you may enter into rest and peace. But you are not yet entered. You were told today [in Thomas Goodwin's sermon that preceded the opening of the Parliament] of a people brought out of Egypt towards the land of Canaan, but, through unbelief, murmuring, repining and other temptations and sins, wherewith God was provoked, they were fain to come back again, and linger many years in the wilderness, before they came to the place of rest.¹³

He hoped that 'if the Lord's blessing and His presence go along with the management of affairs at this meeting', Parliament would 'be enabled to put the topstone to this work, and make the nation happy'. But he insisted that 'this must be by knowing the true state of affairs; that you are yet, like the people under circumcision, but raw. Your peaces are but newly made.'¹⁴ England thus, in Cromwell's view, bore the marks of being a chosen people and now had to embrace that responsibility by liberating the godly, encouraging the ungodly towards the ways of godliness, and thereby furthering God's purpose for England.

These objectives formed urgent priorities throughout Cromwell's career, although he remained flexible about the institutional means by which they might be achieved. He was, as he reportedly put it in the Putney Debates in the autumn of 1647, not 'wedded and glued to forms of government' for these were 'but dross and dung in comparison of Christ'.¹⁵ Yet this pragmatic approach to constitutional forms went along with a preference for working with Parliaments which he continued to see as 'the truest way to know what the mind of the nation is'.¹⁶ As late as April 1657, he remained convinced that 'whatsoever is done without authority of Parliament in order to settlement, will neither be very honest, nor to me very comprehensible'.¹⁷

Whatever his issues with individual Parliaments, this commitment to the 'authority of Parliament' was deeply rooted within Cromwell. During the Civil Wars, he urged Parliament to liberate and mobilize the godly so that they could spearhead a revolution against a monarch tainted by false religion. His correspondence from this period constantly reiterated the need

for those who managed the Parliamentary war effort to support and promote the godly, and to trust them to drive forward the fight against Charles I. This was the principle that lay behind his famous letter of September 1643 to Sir William Spring and Maurice Barrow, prominent members of the Suffolk County Committee, in which he declared: 'A few honest men are better than numbers. ... If you choose godly, honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them. ... I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else'.¹⁸ In Cromwell's vocabulary, 'honest' occurred frequently as a close synonym for godly or righteous, and he saw the Civil War in terms of the 'godly party's' struggle on behalf of God's cause: hence his assertion that the battle of Marston Moor 'had all the evidences of an absolute victory obtained by the Lord's blessing upon the godly party principally'.¹⁹ The following year, after Naseby, he was more outspoken and wrote to William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons: 'Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you in the name of God, not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and humility in all that are concerned in it. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for.'²⁰ Three months later, following Parliament's recapture of Bristol, Cromwell wrote even more fervently to Lenthall:

Faith and prayer obtained this city for you: I do not say ours only, but of the people of God with you and all England over, who have wrestled with God for a blessing in this very thing. ... Presbyterians, Independents, all had here the same spirit of faith and prayer; the same pretence and answer; they agree here, know no names of difference: pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere.²¹

Although the Commons censored these passages in both letters before printing them, Cromwell's allies in the Lords ensured that full versions were subsequently published.²²

Alongside these attempts to liberate the godly minority, the less godly majority was to be ruled in ways that Cromwell believed were in its best interests even if not necessarily pleasing to it. As he reportedly asserted in the summer of 1647, 'it is the general good of them and all the people of the

kingdom that's the question – what's for their good, not what pleases them.²³ Cromwell believed in a dual approach of liberating the godly and taking a firm hand with the ungodly, a challenging strategy that required energy and vision on the part of England's rulers, especially those in Parliament.

III

Unfortunately, from the later 1640s onwards, Cromwell often found Parliaments sadly lacking in those qualities. In January 1648, in the wake of the King's escape from Hampton Court and his engagement with the Scots, Cromwell urged the Commons to pass the Vote of No Addresses, and to be mindful of its duty to the godly who had fought for Parliament: 'Look on the people you represent, and break not your trust, and expose not the honest party of the kingdom, who have bled for you, and suffer not misery to fall upon them for want of courage and resolution in you, else the honest people may take such courses as nature dictates to them.'²⁴ Here again we see the repeated use of the word 'honest' as a synonym for godly. Cromwell was determined that Parliament should not betray its trust to these people, and fear of such a betrayal is crucial in understanding his treatment of subsequent Parliaments.

It helps to explain, for example, his deteriorating relationship with the Rump and his eventual expulsion of it on 20 April 1653. According to one account of Cromwell's speech that day, his denunciation of the Rumpers included the question 'how can you be a Parliament for God's people?'²⁵ In a declaration published two days later, Cromwell argued that 'there more and more appeared amongst [the Rumpers] an aversion to the things themselves, with much bitterness and opposition to the people of God, and His spirit acting in them'. He felt that 'this Parliament ... would never answer those ends which God, His people, and the whole nation expected from them'; instead, there needed to be 'some more effectual means to secure the cause which the good people of this Commonwealth had been so long engaged in and to establish righteousness and peace in these nations'.²⁶

Cromwell initially believed that he had found such an 'effectual means' in Barebone's Parliament. Convinced that the Rump had betrayed its trust to the godly, he adopted Major-General Thomas Harrison's scheme of an assembly consisting exclusively of the godly. Modelled on the ancient

Jewish Sanhedrin of saints, this body comprised 140 carefully selected godly souls, nominated by the radical religious congregations of London, and added to by the army council.²⁷ The members were to be ‘persons fearing God, and of approved fidelity and honesty’.²⁸ Once again, Cromwell’s underlying hope was that the interests of the godly and of the whole nation could be reconciled, and in his summons to members of Barebone’s, he spoke in the same breath of their ‘love to, and courage for, God and the interest of His cause, and of the good people of this Commonwealth’.²⁹

The same desire to further the interests both of the godly and of the whole nation was evident in Cromwell’s remarkable opening address to the assembly on 4 July 1653: ‘if God give you hearts to be easy to be entreated, to be peaceably spirited, to be full of good fruits, bearing good fruits to the nation, to men as men, to the people of God, to all in their several stations – this will teach you to execute the judgement of mercy and truth.’³⁰ He urged them ‘to be as just towards an unbeliever as towards a believer’, and this passage culminated in what John Morrill has called ‘the loveliest of all [Cromwell’s] pleas for toleration’:³¹

I beseech you – but I think I need not – have a care of the whole flock. Love the sheep, love the lambs; love all, tender all, cherish and countenance all, in all things that are good. And if the poorest Christian, the most mistaken Christian, shall desire to leave peaceably and quietly under you – I say, if any shall desire but to lead a life in godliness and honesty, let him be protected.³²

Cromwell’s high hopes were to be cruelly disappointed. Barebone’s soon degenerated into internal squabbling over which reforms to prioritize, until the moderate majority – ‘believing that the issue of that meeting would have been the subversion of the laws and of all the liberties of this nation, the destruction of the ministry of this nation; in a word, the confusion of all things’³³ – voted on 12 December 1653 to dissolve the assembly and surrendered power back to Cromwell, who came to regard the whole episode as ‘a story of my own weakness and folly’.³⁴

Four days later, Cromwell was installed as Lord Protector under the terms of the newly adopted Instrument of Government. Throughout the Protectorate Cromwell continued to pursue the twin goals of liberty of

conscience for the godly, and pushing the ungodly towards behaviour fit for members of an Elect nation. That pressure on the ungodly was sometimes fairly gentle, sometimes more robust, depending mainly on how far they were willing to live peaceably under the Cromwellian regime. Both these policies encountered considerable resistance within Parliament and in the country more widely, and it is worth analysing Cromwell's pursuit of each of them during the Protectorate.

IV

As Lord Protector, he remained convinced that the godly should enjoy liberty of conscience.³⁵ This was one of the four 'fundamentals' in the Recognition which he required members of the first Protectorate Parliament to sign on 12 September 1654. As he told them that day:

Is not liberty of conscience in religion a fundamental? ... Liberty of conscience is a natural right; and he that would have it, ought to give it; having himself liberty to settle what he likes for the public. Every sect saith: "Oh, give me liberty!" But give him it, and to his power he will not yield it to anybody else. Where is our ingenuousness? Liberty of conscience – truly that's a thing ought to be very reciprocal.³⁶

Yet, even after the withdrawal of between fifty and eighty members in protest at having to sign the Recognition, the issue of liberty of conscience continued to be a bone of contention between Cromwell and those who feared that it would unleash what they saw as errors, heresies and blasphemies.³⁷

Undeterred by this opposition, when he opened the second Protectorate Parliament Cromwell spoke at length about who he believed should enjoy liberty of conscience and who should be excluded from it. He affirmed that 'whatever pretensions to religion would continue quiet [and] peaceable ... should enjoy conscience and liberty to themselves; and not make religion a pretence for arms and blood, truly we have suffered them, and that cheerfully, so to enjoy their own liberties.' On the other hand, 'whatsoever is contrary, and not peaceable, let the pretence be never so specious – if it tend to combination, to interests and factions – we shall not care, by the grace of God, whom we meet withal, though never so specious, though

never so quiet. And truly I am against all liberty of conscience repugnant to this.’ Cromwell then came as close as he ever did to defining who in his view constituted the godly. These were:

men that believe in Jesus Christ – that’s the form that gives the being to true religion, faith in Christ and walking in a profession answerable to that faith – men that believe the remission of sins through the blood of Christ and free justification by the blood of Christ, and live upon the grace of God: ... men that are certain they are so, they are members of Jesus Christ, and are to Him as the apple of His eye.

He insisted that ‘whoever hath this faith, let his form be what it will, [if] he [is] walking peaceably, without the prejudicing of others under another form, it is a debt due to God and Christ; and He will require it, if he, that Christian, may not enjoy this liberty.’³⁸

Many Members of Parliament nevertheless remained uneasy about the dangers of extending liberty of conscience more broadly, as the debates over the fate of the Quaker James Naylor in December 1656 showed.³⁹ By the mid-1650s, Quakerism was a particular cause of anxiety for those who feared that religious liberty might turn to licence: in the wake of Naylor’s case, they ensured that the Humble Petition and Advice did not extend liberty of conscience to those who published ‘horrible blasphemies’ or held forth ‘licentiousness and profaneness’.⁴⁰ This article defined the limits of liberty of conscience more precisely than the Instrument of Government had done, and it remained in the Humble Petition despite Cromwell’s continuing commitment to what he called ‘that great, natural, and religious liberty, which is liberty of conscience.’⁴¹ This was one of Cromwell’s most cherished priorities right up to his death, and in his penultimate speech to Parliament, on 25 January 1658, he pleaded that ‘liberty of conscience may be secured for honest people, that they may serve God without fear; that every just interest may be preserved; that a godly ministry may be upheld, and not affronted by seducing and seduced spirits; that all men may be preserved in their just rights, whether civil or spiritual’.⁴²

What Cromwell found particularly frustrating was the lack of reciprocity among the godly and he was greatly distressed by evidence of mutual

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antagonism between God's people. In his speech dissolving the first Protectorate Parliament on 22 January 1655 he asked:

Is there not yet upon the spirits of men a strange itch? Nothing will satisfy them unless they can put their finger upon their brethren's consciences, to pinch them there. Is it ingenuous to ask liberty, and not to give it? What greater hypocrisy than for those who were oppressed by the Bishops to become the greatest oppressors themselves, as soon as their yoke was removed?²⁴³

This hypocrisy and lack of mutual toleration continued to haunt him, and prompted one of the most deeply felt – indeed disturbing – passages in his speech of 25 January 1658:

What is the general spirit of this nation? ... What is it? That every sect may be uppermost. That every sort of men may get the power into their hands, and they would use it well – that every sect may get the power into their hands. ... We have an appetite to variety, to be not only making wounds, but widening those already made, as if we should see one making wounds in a man's side, and would desire nothing more than to be groping and groveling with his fingers in those wounds. ... This is the spirit of those that would trample on men's liberties in spiritual respects. They would be making wounds, and rending and tearing, and making them wider than they are. Is not this the case?²⁴⁴

This horrific vision of wounds being torn open stood in dramatic contrast to Cromwell's ideal of the 'several forms of godliness in this nation'²⁴⁵ living together in mutual tolerance and respect. It showed how far, during the last year of his life, he felt that realities in England had fallen short of his hopes.

What, meanwhile, of those people who fell outside Cromwell's definition of the godly? Towards them he developed policies designed to encourage them, more or less forcibly, to accept the responsibilities of being members of a chosen people. In 1654, he issued two Protectoral ordinances intended to improve the quality of ministers and schoolmasters: the first established a national body of 'triers' to vet all new clergy, while the second set up county commissioners known as 'ejectors' to expel 'scandalous, ignorant and

insufficient ministers and schoolmasters'.⁴⁶ Jeffrey Collins has argued that the creation of these bodies was 'almost certainly the most significant institutional achievement of the Interregnum regimes'.⁴⁷ In general, historians have concluded that the triers were rather more successful than the ejectors.⁴⁸ Cromwell himself wielded extensive ecclesiastical patronage as Lord Protector, having inherited the rights both of the Crown and of many Royalists, and his own patronage may have accounted for as many as forty per cent of the triers' presentations.⁴⁹ By contrast, the impact of the ejectors appears to have been patchy at best, and to have varied considerably from region to region.⁵⁰ Cromwell took a very positive view of these innovations. On 21 April 1657 he told representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament that 'we have settled very much the business of the ministry', and went on: 'If I have anything to rejoice in before the Lord in this world, as having done any good or service, I can say it from my heart, ... that it hath been [this]'. He asserted that 'there hath not been such a service to England since the Christian religion was professed in England', and that 'we know not how better to answer our duty to God and the nation and the people of God, in that respect, than in doing what we did'.⁵¹ Here again, Cromwell's yardstick for success was how far he believed that the interests of both the nation and the people of God were being efficiently served.

Those who failed to respond to the improved quality of the ministry, or who actively tried to subvert godly practice, could expect to receive harsher treatment. Cromwell declared on 22 January 1655:

As for prophane persons, blasphemers, such as preach sedition; the railers, evil-speakers, who seek by evil words to corrupt good manners; persons of loose conversation – punishment from the civil magistrate ought to meet with them. Because, if these pretend conscience, yet walking disorderly and not according but contrary to the Gospel, and even to natural light, they are judged of all, and their sins being open, make them subjects of the magistrate's sword, who ought not to bear it in vain.⁵²

Cromwell's position hardened significantly during the course of that year. Following Penruddock's Rising in March 1655, and then the failure of the Western Design in April-May, he became more and more determined not

only to tighten security against Royalists but also to promote what he called a ‘reformation of manners’.⁵³ He later reflected that ‘since fair means would not indulge, foul should enforce the Royal party to a peaceable deportment’. The results were the Decimation Tax and the rule of the Major-Generals. Cromwell insisted that ‘the sole end of this way of procedure was the security of the peace of the nation, the suppressing of vice and encouragement of virtue, the very end of magistracy’.⁵⁴ The Major-Generals were instructed to ‘encourage and promote godliness and virtue, and discourage and discountenance all profaneness and ungodliness’. They were also ‘to enforce the laws against drunkenness, blaspheming and taking of the name of God in vain, by swearing and cursing, plays and interludes, and profaning the Lord's Day, and such-like wickedness and abominations’.⁵⁵

Cromwell was deeply committed to this ‘reformation of manners’. As he told the second Protectorate Parliament on 17 September 1656: ‘It is a thing I am confident our liberty and prosperity depends upon – reformation. To make it a shame to see men to be bold in sin and profaneness, and God will bless you. You will be a blessing to the nation; and by this, will be more repairers of breaches than by anything in the world.’⁵⁶ In that same speech, he presented a very positive view of the Major-Generals: ‘truly I think if ever anything were justifiable as to necessity, and honest in every respect, this was’, and he went on to assert that their rule ‘hath been more effectual towards the discountenancing of vice and settling religion than anything done these fifty years’.⁵⁷ Historians have generally been rather less optimistic about the impact of the Major-Generals. In the most detailed study of this episode, Christopher Durston concluded that although they had some success in improving the regime’s security, in terms of ‘creating a more godly society’ they ‘failed unequivocally’.⁵⁸ Their remit was too ambitious, and they were given too little time and insufficient support, for them to achieve more than very limited progress towards godly reformation. In areas where they had the assistance of sympathetic local commissioners – as John Sutton has found in Staffordshire, for example⁵⁹ – some success was possible, but in much of England there was a marked lack of popular enthusiasm for Cromwell’s vision. What the experiment did succeed in creating was considerable resentment of rule by ‘swordsmen’: the elections of 1656, dominated by cries of ‘no swordsmen; no decimators’, returned a Parliament that was strongly opposed to the Major-Generals, and that ended their rule by voting down the Militia Bill in January 1657.⁶⁰ The godly thus

remained a minority, grateful no doubt for the Major-Generals' affirmation and encouragement, but continuing to need the regime's protection.

V

This exploration of Cromwell's complex understanding of the people of God helps, in conclusion, to shed light on the paradoxical nature of his achievements and legacy. On the one hand, Cromwell failed to create the godly nation for which he yearned. As Derek Hirst has written, 'there is surprisingly little evidence of the advance of godliness. ... Godly rule and reformation had ... proved to be an image to which the world stubbornly refused to be remade.'⁶¹ Christopher Durston echoed him: 'Throughout the 1650s, the English and Welsh peoples showed themselves to be both strongly attached to their traditional festive culture and deeply antagonistic to the new godly one that Cromwell's government was attempting to impose upon them.'⁶² Barry Coward likewise argued that 'Cromwell's most signal failure was his inability to advance significantly the godly reformation, the pursuit of which had been the central aim of his career'. Equally, Coward also noted that Cromwell's 'one positive lasting effect on the future development of the country ... [was] the establishment of Protestant nonconformity as a permanent feature of life in Britain from that day to this'.⁶³ The Restoration settlement proved unable to eradicate it: after 1660, widespread Protestant dissent remained ingrained within English society, and the Church of England henceforth lost any credible claim to be a national, comprehensive church.⁶⁴ The dichotomy of Church and Chapel, so characteristic of English communities down to the present, owes much to Cromwell's support for non-Anglican forms of Protestantism during the 1650s. Whatever his frustrations that more people did not embrace godliness, the godly minority in England did survive, thanks in no small measure to the fact that he had affirmed and liberated them. Cromwell recognised this as a genuine achievement. As he put it in Parliament on 20 January 1658: 'who could have forethought, when we were plunged into the midst of our troubles, that ever the people of God should have had liberty to worship God without fear of enemies?'⁶⁵ The people of God certainly encountered enemies after 1660, but the Interregnum regime had left them well placed to cope with such hazards and they proved remarkably resilient in the face of persecution.

In the end, Cromwell's tragedy was that he was unable to reconcile the interests of the godly minority, to which he belonged, with those of the whole nation. Despite wishing, as in April 1657, to hear 'a song of reconciliation' between 'the liberty of the people of God' and 'the liberty of the nation', it was ultimately not possible to make 'these two interests' consistent with each other. Cromwell was convinced that England was a chosen people, like the people of Israel in the Old Testament, but he failed to persuade more than a minority of the nation to share in this vision. The fact that they remained a minority was the measure of his failure to create a godly nation. Equally, the fact that they survived, and could not be extirpated despite the best efforts of the Restoration regime, underlined the extent of his achievement in protecting and encouraging the godly minority. The people of God, though not as numerous as Cromwell would have liked, nevertheless had much reason to be grateful to him.

This was the Cromwell Collection lecture presented at Huntingdon on 9 November 2011.

- ¹ *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, with elucidations by Thomas Carlyle, edited in three volumes with notes, supplement and enlarged index by S.C. Lomas, with an introduction by C.H. Firth, M.A.* (3 vols., 1904) [hereafter cited as Lomas-Carlyle], III, 101 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 21 April 1657). In these notes, place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.
- ² W.C. Abbott (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1937-47), III, 290 (Declaration of 9 May 1654).
- ³ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 425 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 22 January 1654[/5]).
- ⁴ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 153-4 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 20 January 1657[/8]).
- ⁵ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 390-1 (Cromwell to Colonel Robert Hammond, 6 November 1648).
- ⁶ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 283 (Cromwell to Barebone's Parliament, 4 July 1653).

- ⁷ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 419 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 22 January 1654[5]).
- ⁸ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 419 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 22 January 1654[5]).
- ⁹ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 31 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 3 April 1657).
- ¹⁰ See, for example, Anthony Fletcher, 'Oliver Cromwell and the Godly Nation', in John Morrill (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (Harlow, 1990), pp. 209-33; Derek Hirst, 'The Failure of Godly Rule in the English Republic', *Past and Present*, CXXXII (1991), 33-66; Ann Hughes, 'The Frustrations of the Godly', in John Morrill (ed.), *Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s* (1992), pp. 70-90.
- ¹¹ See, for example, R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford, 1979); Patrick Collinson, 'England and International Calvinism, 1558-1640', in Menna Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism, 1541-1715* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 197-223; and the essays in the *Douglas Southall Freeman Historical Review* (Richmond, VA; spring 1999).
- ¹² On this theme, see especially G. Groenhuis, 'Calvinism and the National Consciousness: the Dutch Republic as the New Israel', in A. Duke and C. Tamse (eds.), *Church and State since the Reformation* (The Hague, 1981), pp. 118-33; Alastair Duke, 'The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism in the Netherlands, 1561-1618', in Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism*, pp. 109-34.
- ¹³ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 358 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 4 September 1654).
- ¹⁴ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 358 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 4 September 1654).
- ¹⁵ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 362, 373 (Cromwell at the Putney Debates, 28 October, 1 November 1647).
- ¹⁶ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 58 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 13 April 1657).

- ¹⁷ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 81 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 20 April 1657).
- ¹⁸ Lomas-Carlyle, I, 154 (Cromwell to Sir William Spring and Maurice Barrow, [?] September 1643).
- ¹⁹ Lomas-Carlyle, I, 176 (Cromwell to Colonel Valentine Walton, 5 July 1644).
- ²⁰ Lomas-Carlyle, I, 205 (Cromwell to William Lenthall, 14 June 1645).
- ²¹ Lomas-Carlyle, I, 217-18 (Cromwell to William Lenthall, 14 September 1645).
- ²² John Morrill, *Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 2007), p. 28; J.S.A. Adamson, 'Oliver Cromwell and the Long Parliament', in Morrill (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, pp. 49-92, at pp. 66-8.
- ²³ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 345 (Cromwell to the 'Council of War' at Reading, 16 July 1647).
- ²⁴ British Library, Add. MS 50200 (parliamentary diary of John Boys), pp. 31-2 (3 January 1648); printed as 'The Diary of John Boys, 1647-8', ed. D. Underdown, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, XXXIX (1966), 141-64; quotation at 156.
- ²⁵ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 265.
- ²⁶ S.R. Gardiner (ed.), *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660* (3rd edition, Oxford, 1906), pp. 400-04 (declaration by the Lord General and Council, 22 April 1653); quotations at pp. 401-03.
- ²⁷ The fullest account of Barebone's Parliament and its members is Austin Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate* (Oxford, 1982).
- ²⁸ Gardiner (ed.), *Constitutional Documents*, p. 405 (Cromwell's summons to a member of Barebone's Parliament, 6 June 1653); Lomas-Carlyle, III, 121.
- ²⁹ Gardiner (ed.), *Constitutional Documents*, p. 405.
- ³⁰ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 292 (Cromwell to Barebone's Parliament, 4 July 1653).
- ³¹ John Morrill, 'Rewriting Cromwell: A Case of Deafening Silences', *Canadian Journal of History*, XXXVIII (2003), 553-78, at 576.
- ³² Lomas-Carlyle, II, 294 (Cromwell to Barebone's Parliament, 4 July 1653).

- ³³ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 99 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 21 April 1657).
- ³⁴ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 98 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 21 April 1657).
- ³⁵ Blair Worden, 'Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate', in W.J. Sheils (ed.), *Persecution and Toleration* (Studies in Church History, XXI, 1984), pp. 199-233.
- ³⁶ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 382-3 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 12 September 1654).
- ³⁷ Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics in the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 83-7, 197-205.
- ³⁸ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 535-6 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 17 September 1656).
- ³⁹ Little and Smith, *Parliaments and Politics*, pp. 138, 183-5, 211-14.
- ⁴⁰ Gardiner (ed.), *Constitutional Documents*, p. 455 (Humble Petition and Advice, 25 May 1657, § 11).
- ⁴¹ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 126-7 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 8 May 1657); Little and Smith, *Parliaments and Politics*, pp. 214-15.
- ⁴² Lomas-Carlyle, III, 184 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 25 January 1657[/8]).
- ⁴³ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 417 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 22 January 1654[/5]).
- ⁴⁴ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 174-5 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 25 January 1657[/8]).
- ⁴⁵ Lomas-Carlyle, II, 283 (Cromwell to Barebone's Parliament, 4 July 1653).
- ⁴⁶ C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (eds.), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (3 vols., 1911), II, 855-8, 968-90.
- ⁴⁷ Jeffrey R. Collins, 'The Church Settlement of Oliver Cromwell', *History*, LXXXVII (2002), 18-40, at 18.
- ⁴⁸ Ann Hughes, "'The Public Profession of these Nations': the National Church Interregnum England", in Christopher Durston and Judith

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- 49 Hughes, “‘The Public Profession of these Nations’”, p. 105.
- 50 Christopher Durston, ‘Policing the Cromwellian Church: The Activities of the County Ejection Committees, 1654-1659’, in Patrick Little (ed.), *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 189-206.
- 51 Lomas-Carlyle, III, 118-19 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 21 April 1657).
- 52 Lomas-Carlyle, II, 417-18 (Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament, 22 January 1654[5]).
- 53 Lomas-Carlyle, II, 538, 540 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 17 September 1656); III, 113 (Cromwell to the representatives of the second Protectorate Parliament, 21 April 1657).
- 54 Lomas-Carlyle, III, 475-6 (Cromwell to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London, 11 March 1655[6]).
- 55 Abbott (ed.), *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, III, 845 (Instructions to the Major-Generals).
- 56 Lomas-Carlyle, II, 540-1 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 17 September 1656).
- 57 Lomas-Carlyle, II, 531, 543 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 17 September 1656).
- 58 Christopher Durston, *Cromwell’s Major-Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2001), p. 228.
- 59 John Sutton, ‘Cromwell’s commissioners for preserving the peace of the Commonwealth: a Staffordshire case study’, in Ian Gentles, John Morrill and Blair Worden (eds.), *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 151-82.
- 60 Durston, *Cromwell’s Major-Generals*, chapters 8 and 9.
- 61 Hirst, ‘Failure of Godly Rule’, 46, 66.
- 62 Durston, *Cromwell’s Major-Generals*, p. 179.
- 63 Barry Coward, *Oliver Cromwell* (Harlow, 1991), pp. 161, 176. See also Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester, 2002), p. 194.

- ⁶⁴ See, for example, John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven, 1991), pp. 43-9, 123-8, 263-6; Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (2005), pp. 28-9, 193-6, 300-09.
- ⁶⁵ Lomas-Carlyle, III, 154 (Cromwell to the second Protectorate Parliament, 20 January 1657[/8]).

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THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION AND ITS PRESIDENTS

By Dr Patrick Little

For most members of the Cromwell Association, the president is the man (and so far it has only been men) who lays the wreath at the Cromwell Day service at Westminster, casts a benevolent eye over proceedings at the Annual General Meeting, provides erudite pieces for *Cromwelliana*, and makes himself available to chat with members at study days and other meetings. In many ways he is the ‘father’ of the Association – an image that fits with the long terms of office served by successive presidents. Since the foundation of the Association in 1937, there have been only six presidents.

Isaac Foot, the Association’s founder, served first as chairman, and then in the newly created post of president from 1951 until his death in 1960. He was succeeded by Dr Maurice Ashley the following year. Maurice Ashley resigned in 1977 and was replaced by Professor Ivan Roots, who was succeeded by Dr (now Professor) John Morrill in 1989. In 1999 John Morrill was replaced by Dr (and later Professor) Barry Coward. In 2009 Barry Coward resigned in favour of the present incumbent, Professor Peter Gaunt. The role of president has changed during this period, from executive officer to supervisor, and at the same time the presidency has become more ‘professional’, not to say professorial, with enthusiastic amateurs giving way to university academics. Despite the distancing of the president from the day-to-day running of the Association – with the executive role now being fulfilled by the chairman – he remains crucial in overseeing the work of the Association, often attending council meetings and keeping in regular contact with council members. The presidents have invariably been involved in the selection of chairmen. Isaac Foot was presumably a self-appointed chairman in 1937; Trewin Coplestone was drawn into the Association because his aunt was Isaac Foot’s second wife; Peter Gaunt was a research student of Ivan Roots; and I was supervised by Barry Coward. And now the Association is a charity, the president has also become a trustee, with an additional formal responsibility for its continuing prosperity. So there is a little more to being president than simply laying the wreath and being nice to people! To my mind, the presidents have set the whole tone of the Association, and it is therefore worth looking at them as individuals, to see how they came to be interested in Cromwell, and involved in the Association. As others [during the course of this study day] are looking in more detail at Isaac Foot and Maurice Ashley, I shall deal with them only briefly here, and concentrate instead on the three academic

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presidents who followed: Ivan Roots, John Morrill and Barry Coward. I hope the first two will forgive any impertinence on my part, and that I will not do any injustice to Barry's memory.

I

In his address at Cromwell Day in 1976, Isaac Foot's son, Hugh, Lord Caradon of St Cleer, remembered the words of his brother, John, Lord Foot of Buckland Monachorum, at the same event nine years before:

He said that, like his brothers and sisters, he was, to use his phrase, "brought up with Oliver Cromwell". As children, he said, we were surrounded by every kind of reminder of Cromwell. Our family home was full of portraits, busts and prints of the Lord Protector and his captains. My father's library of the seventeenth century in general and Cromwell in particular was immense, and there were mountains of contemporary pamphlets and broadsheets. As my brother said of our home, "the spirit of the man seemed to lurk around the place", and it sometimes seemed that my father had only recently been in solemn but heartening conference with Oliver himself.¹

Isaac Foot's personal affinity with Cromwell – so obvious to his children – was perhaps born of their apparent similarity of background and outlook. Foot also came from a provincial town – Plymouth, rather than Huntingdon – and went to the local grammar school. A period of divergence followed. Instead of going to university, as Cromwell had done, Foot went into the junior ranks of the civil service before bettering himself by training as a solicitor, eventually setting up his own law firm in Plymouth. Thereafter, the two careers were fairly similar, with Foot becoming involved in politics first as a councillor in Plymouth and then as MP for Bodmin, 1922-4 and 1929-35. Perhaps there were sufficient similarities, despite the 300 year gulf between the two, to encourage Foot to feel that Cromwell was on his wavelength. More importantly, he considered the two men shared certain aspirations for their country. In politics, Foot was a Liberal, and he admired what he saw as Cromwell's pursuit of English freedom from tyranny; in religion, he was a Methodist, and he certainly considered Cromwell and his friends were the forerunners of respectable non-conformity. It is telling that his most famous book, published in 1944, was a comparison of Oliver

Cromwell and Abraham Lincoln. Foot shared the late nineteenth and early twentieth century view of Cromwell as a key figure in the development of modern Britain, and it was this that inspired him to form the Association in 1937, and to begin his campaign of erecting permanent memorials to his hero.²

II

Issac Foot died in December 1960, and Dr Maurice Ashley was chosen as the new president the following year. Ashley was already well-known as a Cromwell scholar. His doctoral thesis, on Cromwellian trade and commerce, had been published in 1934; this was followed by an attack on Cromwell as '*The Conservative Dictator*' in 1937; a study of *Cromwell's Generals* in 1954; and a penitential second volume, published in 1957, entitled *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell*. Ashley was not, however, an academic historian. The son of Sir Percy Ashley, a senior civil servant, he had attended St Paul's School before going up to Oxford, but he did not land the university position he coveted, and instead became a research assistant for Winston Churchill in the early 1930s, providing the material, and occasional corrections, to his book on the Duke of Marlborough. Thereafter Ashley became a journalist, eventually editing the Listener magazine and, like many journalists, he wrote books in his spare time, as an act of intellectual fulfilment as well as an additional source of income. Ashley's interest in Cromwell may have been inspired by his moderate, Liberal beliefs, and this no doubt encouraged his condemnation of Cromwell as a proto-fascist in 1937: 'for once, his judgement of the past was coloured by the pre-occupations of the present', as Austin Woolrych has put it. Ashley, however, was not exactly a man of the people. 'He loved to entertain at the Reform Club'; the award of an honorary DLitt from Oxford later in life 'particularly pleased him'; and he was made a CBE in 1978. Ashley also had a 'deep interest in character'; and perhaps it was the enigma of Cromwell that encouraged Ashley to persevere, and eventually to consider that he might have been mistaken.³

By 1957 – still a few years before becoming the Association's president – he could speak of Cromwell as a selfless puritan hero, whose ambition was for his country, not himself, and a champion of liberty of conscience: 'and it is from liberty of conscience that so many of our later liberties have flowed: freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of

trade...⁴ This was already an old-fashioned approach, akin to Foot and the pre-war Liberals, and Ashley admitted as much. In the conclusion to his book he remarked wistfully that:

Oliver Cromwell was a Christian by practice as well as by precept, a lover of his country, an imperialist, who raised England to be a Great Power. These are old-fashioned virtues – if indeed they are still considered virtues – in a world 300 years older than when he lived.⁵

III

In 1977, when Maurice Ashley stepped down as president, the Association acquired its first academic president, Professor Ivan Roots of Exeter University. Roots had come to Ashley's attention through *The Listener*, as he had contributed articles on various seventeenth century characters, and was well known as an author of popular and accessible books and articles.⁶ Roots was born in Maidstone, attending the grammar school there before going up to Balliol College, Oxford, in 1938. At Balliol he encountered the Marxist historian, Christopher Hill, whose work on radical ideas during the civil wars proved an inspiration. Roots was, however, more of an intellectual than an activist. As one friend and colleague remembered, 'Ivan was, like most enemies of conservatism and tepid liberalism in those days, a Marxist or semi-Marxist, though he preferred discussion of the work of Lenin to demonstrations with the workers of Cowley. Most of all he hated pomposity, moral superiority and the vaunted tolerance that broke down in the face of real disagreement. But one of Ivan's outstanding qualities was soon evident: he could be on friendly terms with almost everyone'.⁷ This genial nature stood Roots in good stead during the war (when he served in India and Burma) and at Cardiff University, whence he transferred to Exeter in 1967.

Roots had studied Cromwell as a sixth form special subject, and his interest was further encouraged by his appreciation of literature, and especially the poet, Andrew Marvell. In his address to Cromwell Day in 1971 he elaborated:

For more years than I care to remember Oliver Cromwell has fascinated me and puzzled me, too. What first set me off was a

poem, Andrew Marvell's *An Horatian Ode on Cromwell's Return from Ireland...* The man who could strike the imagination of so thoughtful and subtle a poet as Marvell must, I felt, have had remarkable qualities – and I have never since had any cause to doubt it.⁸

Characteristically, Roots took the opportunity to highlight the humanity of Cromwell, rather than his greatness:

Much has been made of Cromwell's connections with English liberties and interests, of his great work for English power and prestige... But what I would stress today is not Cromwell's boldness and confidence. They were in fact fitful and in the long run perhaps no more valuable than his doubts and diffidence. His career is marked throughout by inconsistencies, hesitations and contradictions. They seem to me to point up his true humanity – to make him a complex individual man like you and me.⁹

This uncertainty, he continues, underlay Cromwell's belief in toleration and liberty of conscience even for those he did not agree with, and in what may have been a deliberate riposte to Ashley, Roots ended his address with what he called 'the hallmarks of his greatness', which were not to do with England's rise to power but rather Cromwell's personal 'capacity for honest doubt of his own capacity, his appreciation, sometimes disappointed, that all men are seekers, his indefatigability'.¹⁰

This willingness to consider Cromwell 'warts and all', as a fascinating flawed individual rather than a super-hero, has great resonance today, when scholars increasingly look for Cromwell in context, to discover what was common and uncommon about his personality and his achievements. Roots went much further in an address to Cromwell Day in 1978 – the year after he became president - entitled 'The Humanity of Oliver Cromwell': 'There is one clear quality in him that we admire – and that is his sense of individuality. For us Oliver is not a type – the puritan, the military policeman, the revolutionary or whatever – but "Oliver Cromwell", singular, unique, himself alone – an individual always aware of the individuality and potentiality of others'.¹¹ Cromwell had doubts as well as certainties, flaws as well as virtues, according to Roots. And in a passage that seems to reflect

his own exhilaration when dealing with his difficult subject: ‘the swift, slow-moving, confident, self-doubting, pessimistic, hopeful, transparently clear, woefully opaque, cautious, rash, depressed, elated Oliver Cromwell’.¹²

Roots’ view of Cromwell does not seem to have changed much in the intervening 35 years. In 1986 one former research student commented on ‘the breadth of Ivan Roots’ scholarly interests’ covering all aspects of the period from 1640 to 1660, adding that his ‘contribution to scholarship has been to explore that diversity; for him the fascination of a man like Oliver Cromwell lies in the failure of historians to be able to sum him up in a neat phrase or sobriquet’.¹³ In 2004, after a symposium on the Protectorate held at the History of Parliament Trust, Roots sent me a note of thanks for my part in organising the day. One paragraph perhaps sums up his attitude: ‘I am convinced that Oliver looking down on us from up there – and surely he *is* up there! – was looking down on us benignly, wryly and perhaps a little amused at our temerity in thinking that we may at length pin him down. We won’t, but how worthwhile the effort!’¹⁴

IV

Ivan Roots gave up the presidency in 1989, and was succeeded by another academic, Dr John Morrill, a fellow of Selwyn College, Cambridge (and subsequently professor of British and Irish history). Morrill, the son of a headmaster, was born in Cheshire and attended the local grammar school, where he was taught by a respected local historian, Norman Dore, who encouraged him to apply for Oxford. His initial interest in the mid-seventeenth century was nurtured by the exciting work in social and political history then being undertaken at Oxford, notably the work of Christopher Hill. He mentions Hill’s ‘passion for the seventeenth century’, adding that ‘all through my undergraduate days it was his books I found the most exciting’. Unlike Roots, Morrill was not attracted to Hill’s work because of its Marxist undertones. Rather, it was his ‘empathy with the mental world of the past’ that struck him, and in particular his determination ‘to look at how people outside the elite thought and acted’, and he considers that this concern ‘to let the past speak for itself’ also encouraged him to embrace Revisionism later on. Although Hill’s politics left Morrill cold, he was clearly engaged with issues of ‘social justice’ at an early age, as his description of ‘a wobble’ in his career demonstrates: ‘I did actually apply to become a prison governor [on graduating]. There was a social conscience

side to it, which I've always had, which led me later to work with the probation service and subsequently to be ordained'.¹⁵ The connection between this concern for social conscience and Morrill's interest in Cromwell is not immediately obvious from his writings, but it is certainly part of the mix. On Cromwell Day 1988 he told the Association of his frank admiration for Cromwell's determination to make a difference at the very beginning of the civil war:

At a time when most men were dithering, deferring decisions, Cromwell acted. He showed himself a man willing to stand up and be counted; a man driven by Faith not ambition; a man who combined the ability to speak for gentry values and to articulate the values and concerns of the middling sort, the more earthy, practical, unpretentious concerns of the farmer and tradesman. He was a man with a vision of Christian liberty, of the freedom for each individual to hear and respond to the challenge of the gospel clearly expounded. This was at the very centre of his being.¹⁶

Yet, like Roots, Morrill took a while to engage with Oliver Cromwell directly. As he later wrote, 'I first thought about him historically when I was in my last two years at school... I wrote the best essay of my undergraduate years about him (for Keith Thomas). Cromwell had a walk-on part in my doctoral thesis... My early writings all circled around him, but I was increasingly drawn into closer study of his letters and speeches'.¹⁷ Morrill saw the 'key moment' as 'an invitation to be president of the Cromwell Association in 1989, a position I proudly held for a decade'.¹⁸ His involvement with the Association, presumably through Ivan Roots, can be dated to 1981, when (in his own words), 'I was invited to speak... to a Cromwell Association AGM... and liked the genuineness and commitment of all present enough to join forthwith'.¹⁹ On that occasion Morrill gave an address entitled 'King Oliver', which dealt with Cromwell's refusal of the crown. In it he emphasised how taken he was with Cromwell's own words:

The more I read the letters and speeches of Oliver Cromwell, the more convinced I become that while he was a man capable of self-deception he was not capable of deliberate and sustained lies and deceit. Those great speeches, rambling streams-of-consciousness as they are, reveal an earnestness and integrity which transcend the

often inarticulate and at times, frankly, unintelligible form of the utterances. Those of his contemporaries who saw Oliver as a self-serving hypocrite failed to see the underlying consistencies behind the outward reversals of policy. If we listen again to his voice, we will find that he tells us all we need to know about his purposes and aspirations'.²⁰

This fascination with Cromwell's words – with his 'voice' – no doubt derived from his concern to let the past speak for itself, was no passing phase. Thirty years later Morrill is general editor of a forthcoming five-part edition of Cromwell's letters and speeches. The great man's words are still at the heart of Morrill's quest for Cromwell. As he told me recently, 'Working on the five-volume edition has increased my admiration for the passion and commitment of his language and wrestling with the realities of power'.²¹

Morrill is extremely unusual among Cromwell scholars in that he is a Roman Catholic convert – and an ordained deacon at that. Yet he sees this as a benefit, not an obstacle, writing in 2007 that 'I had my own conversion experience in Holy Week 1977, pretty much 350 years after the conversion experience Cromwell describes in one of his letters. Because we share a conversion experience, there are important ways in which I understand him. Because he is a seventeenth century puritan, there are equally important ways in which there is a great divide between us.' Unlike Foot, Morrill could not make an easy connection between his faith and that of Cromwell, and the denominational difference, as well as the chronological gulf, has allowed him to view Cromwell's religion with some detachment, while retaining much sympathy. 'What I admire about him', he writes, 'is his constant striving to put his faith into practice, to submit himself to the will of God; what alarms me about him is the self-righteousness which allowed him to judge others', and especially 'his willingness to let God's ends justify brutal human means'. As a result, Cromwell is allowed to be flawed, even though his sincerity remains unquestioned, and this is central to Morrill's approach to the Lord Protector. As he himself summed it up, 'So – to the incredulity of the bishop who ordained me - I can be a Catholic and an admirer of a man who had both greatness and warts on the inside, as well as on the outside'.²²

John Morrill's personal attachment to Oliver Cromwell is also suggested by his growing collection of 'Cromwelliana', much of it displayed on the mantelpiece of his college room. Morrill's description of his relics runs as follows: 'I own a 1650s engraving of him in full armour (A4 size) and an A2 lithograph reproduction of a seventeenth century portrait. I own an authenticated musket ball from Marston Moor (a gift from Austin Woolrych), a protectoral half-crown, and of course a number of original copies of pamphlets in which he is named'.²³ This is not in the same league as Isaac Foot's collection, but there is another similarity between the two presidents, who seem to have shared a personal identification with the Lord Protector. Like Foot, one can well imagine John Morrill having just been in heartening conference with Oliver himself – although in his case the meeting would have been convivial rather than solemn.

V

Dr Barry Coward (who took over as president in 1999) was born in Rochdale, the son of a printer, and attended grammar school before studying at Sheffield University. In the early 1960s he was involved in student politics, joining the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and taking part in at least one of the big marches to Aldermaston.²⁴ He became a lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London, in 1966, and remained there for the rest of his academic career, cherishing its egalitarian atmosphere and the dedication of the academic staff to their students. He was made professor shortly before his retirement. Coward's interest in Cromwell was also not immediate, but there is no doubt that his political affiliations to the Left influenced his general approach to the civil war and interregnum. As his *Guardian* obituary put it, 'Barry himself had more in common with the radical than the puritan tradition, and was a firm supporter of the traditional values of the Labour Party'.²⁵ He joined Labour in 1980, in protest against Mrs Thatcher's decision to buy Trident. Needless to say he was unhappy about the direction New Labour took after 1997, and left the party soon afterwards. He and his family joined the march against the Iraq War in 2003, and he continued to oppose the bellicose policies of Tony Blair thereafter, although he decided to rejoin the party a few years before his death in 2011, prompted by watching a television interview with Michael Gove!²⁶ Coward was also wary of the Establishment – I suspect he would have been more comfortable with Britain as a republic – and, as a colleague remembered, 'One of the few times that he looked genuinely

worried was on discovering that some of his devoted students were planning on nominating him for a CBE'. There is an obvious contrast here with one of his predecessors. While Maurice Ashley was proud to be granted awards and honours, Barry Coward avoided them: and while Dr Ashley favoured the Reform Club, Barry was at home in the pub.

Coward's initial connection with the Cromwell Association came in 1982, when he spoke to the AGM on the legacy of the Cromwellian period – the 'Persistent Grin'. He began his address by classing himself as among those 'who are admirers of Oliver and who are sympathetic to many aspects of the Good Old Cause',²⁷ and went on to consider the way in which republican rule had a lasting impact on the post-restoration period. The greatest legacy, he declared, was the ideal of religious toleration, 'which would not become a reality for a long time', but 'such was its strength and the sympathy for it in the 1660s that even the harsh bigoted climate of the period was not able to kill off completely the fruits of surely the most appealing of Oliver Cromwell's achievements'.²⁸ This was something of a backhanded compliment, of course, for contemporaries thought the Good Old Cause had been betrayed by Cromwell, and the 'appealing' achievement of liberty of conscience was set apart from the decidedly unappealing ones that Coward chose not to mention. Coward's biography of Cromwell, published in 1991, could also be quite critical of the man. Cromwell had tried and failed to bring about far-reaching changes in Britain, and 'it is undeniable that his achievements fell far short of the aims he strove for throughout his political career, and after his death there was a violent reaction against what he had done, and what he had stood for'. Godly reformation had failed, as had the attempt to promote 'healing and settling' in a divided nation, while the finances were in a mess. 'Yet', as Coward continues, 'it would be a mistake to portray his rule as Protector as a total failure and his effect on subsequent British history as solely negative'.²⁹ Once again, the eventual acceptance of religious toleration and the growth of nonconformity were seen as important legacies, but these were now set aside 'his major political achievement' – 'to make republican government acceptable'.³⁰ For Coward this helped to balance the account: 'Cromwell headed a republican government that, in the face of constant distrust on the part of the gentry and mounting financial debt, ran the country at least as well as monarchical regimes before and after'.³¹

THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION AND ITS PRESIDENTS

A year after the publication of his biography of Cromwell, Coward was invited to give the address at Cromwell Day. In it he was less hesitant about Cromwell's part in the revolution. Indeed, he identified two aspects of Cromwell's career that he found 'remarkable, compelling and attractive': his pursuit of 'an unselfish ideal – a vision – of what he would have liked his country to become' and his commitment to 'making that ideal a reality despite awesome difficulties'. He admired those aspects, he continued, 'not because I share the Cromwellian ideal (in fact, I only sympathise with parts of it; some aspects of it I am quite uneasy about, which is neither here nor there)', but because they demonstrate Cromwell's integrity – he was not 'a self-seeking, power-hungry politician', but a man of 'persistent and strong revolutionary aspirations'.³² In a revealing parallel, Coward described Cromwell as part of the 'post-reformation generation' which demanded further reform in church and state, 'in ways and with probably about the same degree of support among a literate and vocal minority that radical ideas like nuclear disarmament took root among some of my generation that grew up in Britain after the Second World War'.³³ Alongside a demand for godly reformation, Cromwell and his contemporaries also thirsted after 'the Commonwealth ideal', which Coward likened to "social justice", the idea that private greed should not be allowed to lead to public injustice, corruption or unalleviated poverty. This, you may not be surprised to hear, is the aspect of the Cromwellian vision that appeals to me'.³⁴ Coward went on to argue that Cromwell, the man of vision in both political and religious spheres, had been sorely let down by others:

His tragedy was that, as he pursued that ideal, many of those who had once shared that aspiration no longer continued to do so. Just as support for the radical cause of nuclear disarmament that fired some of my generation faded in the late 1960s and 1970s, so the radical cause of godly reformation lost much of its support in the late 1640s and 1650s, as it became increasingly associated with radical threats to turn the social and political world upside down.³⁵

Despite the growing sympathy between Coward and Cromwell, some hesitancy remained. When Coward was asked to be the president of the Association in 1999, he hurriedly became a member. Yet involvement with the Association seems to have encouraged Coward to move still further from his earlier scepticism. His book on the *Cromwellian Protectorate* (of 2002)

was a decidedly more upbeat assessment of the later period of Cromwell's career and the brief rule of his son, and he relished being able to counter those who saw the period as one of increasing conservatism and retrenchment – the long withdrawing roar of the revolution. Coward's introduction to a new collection of essays on the Protectorate, published in 2007, also reveals that he was not entirely comfortable with its generally critical tone. His cheery 'thumbs up' to the Thorneycroft statue when laying the wreath for Cromwell Day 2008 (the 350th anniversary of the Protector's death) suggests that he had come to see Oliver as one of the good guys after all. Something of this can also be divined from the fact that Coward also acquired a collection of Cromwellian bits and pieces, mostly gifts from friends and students, which he kept in his office at home. There was more than a hint of irony about this 'collection', which included a reproduction of an advertisement featuring the 'Great protector' with the solemn byline, 'good shoes deserve Puritan leather soles'; but there was something revealing about its centrepiece: a model of the Oliver Cromwell steam engine, carved from a lump of coal.

VI

This survey of the five presidents of the Association between 1937 and 2009 suggests there were some similarities between them, but more marked are the differences, especially between the first two and the last three. When Maurice Ashley gave up the presidency to Ivan Roots, the patrician tone soon gave way to a more democratic style, with the members electing officers and councillors, and this eventually led to the Association becoming a charity in 2009. The historical emphasis of the Association also changed, from being a society dedicated to Cromwell as a political or religious hero, to whom monuments should be erected, to a forum within which the interested and often knowledgeable members of the public can benefit from historians willing to spread the latest research findings outside the ivory towers of academe. Inevitably this means that members are introduced to a range of different opinions on Cromwell, not all of them complimentary, but this prevents the complacency seen in other societies.

Recent presidents have played an important part in this process. It is interesting that the three 'academic' presidents only came to detailed study of Cromwell once they had made their names in other areas. As a result, the three have tended to share a sense of scepticism about the Protector,

although they have become less critical, and more forgiving, of his failures as their investigations into his career (and their involvement with the Association?) continued. Ivan Roots' concern not to simplify Cromwell but to allow his complications and contradictions to survive has perhaps had an influence here. Another unifying theme is the emphasis of all three on Cromwell's integrity. The Lord Protector was not a self-serving hypocrite. He was capable of self-deception, perhaps, but not the deception of others. The corollary of this is that Cromwell's own words can be mined and sifted to provide us with the essence of his character. These words, the letters and speeches, have formed the basis of the biographies by Coward and Morrill. Roots, in the introduction to his popular edition of the speeches, states succinctly, 'the style is the man'.³⁶ The five-volume edition of Cromwell's writings now in preparation still has as its aim the recovery of what Morrill described in 1981 as Cromwell's 'voice'. Whether this is the right approach to Cromwell remains to be seen. Discussion of the future of Cromwell studies, and the future of the Association will have to be left to others. But as long as there are presidents of the calibre of Roots, Morrill and Coward, members of the Association will be among the first to learn of developments at the cutting edge. The honesty of this approach would surely have appealed to Oliver Cromwell himself.

I am very grateful to Mrs Shirley Coward, Professor John Morrill, Dr Stephen Roberts and Professor Blair Worden for their assistance with this article.

This article was presented at the study day 'Cromwell and the Historians, 1937-2012' held in October 2012.

- ¹ Lord Caradon of St Cleer, 'The work we may do in the world', in Peter Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, (Brentwood, 1999), p. 9.
- ² Duncan Brack (ed.), *The Dictionary of Liberal Biography* (1998), pp. 109-112.
- ³ Obituary by Professor Austin Woolrych, *The Independent*, 4 October 1994.
- ⁴ Maurice Ashley, *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell* (1957), p. 367.
- ⁵ Ashley, *Greatness*, 369.
- ⁶ Personal communication with Stephen Roberts, via email, 9 Oct. 2012.

- ⁷ Donald Pennington, 'Ivan Roots', in Colin Jones, Malyn Newitt and Stephen Roberts (eds), *Politics and People in Revolutionary England: Essays in Honour of Ivan Roots* Oxford, 1986), p. x.
- ⁸ Ivan Roots, 'Cromwell Day, 1971', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, p. 12.
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 13.
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 14.
- ¹¹ Ivan Roots, 'The humanity of Oliver Cromwell', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, p. 108.
- ¹² Ibid, p. 109.
- ¹³ Stephen K. Roberts, 'Introduction', in Jones, Newitt and Roberts (eds), *People and Politics*, p. 8.
- ¹⁴ See Patrick Little (ed.), *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. vii.
- ¹⁵ 'Making History' interview, 26 March 2008 (www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Morrill_John.html).
- ¹⁶ John Morrill, 'Tempered Steel: the making of Oliver Cromwell', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, p. 29.
- ¹⁷ John Morrill, *Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 2007), preface.
- ¹⁸ Idem.
- ¹⁹ Personal communication with John Morrill, via email, 29 Sept. 2012.
- ²⁰ John Morrill, 'King Oliver?', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, 79.
- ²¹ Personal communication with John Morrill, via email, 29 Sept. 2012.
- ²² Morrill, *Cromwell*, preface.
- ²³ Personal communication with John Morrill, via email, 29 Sept. 2012.
- ²⁴ Personal communication with Mrs Shirley Coward, via email, 3 Oct. 2012.
- ²⁵ Obituary by Professor Julian Swan, originally in *The Guardian*, reproduced in *Cromwelliana* (series 2, no. 8, 2011), pp. 67-9..
- ²⁶ Personal communication with Mrs Shirley Coward, via email, 3 Oct. 2012.
- ²⁷ Barry Coward, 'Cromwell and the Restoration: a persistent grin', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, p. 92.
- ²⁸ Ibid, p. 101.
- ²⁹ Barry Coward, *Oliver Cromwell* (Harlow, 1991), p. 161.
- ³⁰ Ibid, p. 165.
- ³¹ Ibid, p. 175.

³² Barry Coward, 'Oliver Cromwell and the godly reformation', in Gaunt (ed.), *Cromwell 400*, pp. 61-3.

³³ Ibid, pp. 63-4.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 64.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 65.

³⁶ Ivan Roots, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (1989), p. xxi.

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WC ABBOTT AND THE HISTORICAL REPUTATION OF OLIVER CROMWELL

By Dr David L. Smith

Wilbur Cortez Abbott is best known for his edition of Oliver Cromwell's writings and speeches published by Harvard University Press between 1937 and 1947.¹ This edition comprises 3,639 pages in four volumes, but over the years since it appeared scholars have become ever more conscious of its shortcomings. The usefulness of the edition is greatly reduced by the lack of tables of contents or running heads, and although it contains roughly 1,250 'texts' it privileges those that were available at Harvard. Above all, Abbott often blended the different variants of a text together to create a single composite version without adequate explanation of how he did this or why he preferred certain readings to others.² Such failings are all the more regrettable given that Abbott undoubtedly intended his edition to be definitive; indeed when it was published reviewers such as David Ogg, Ernest Barker and Godfrey Davies applied this very adjective to it.³ For Abbott, the project was the culmination of an engagement with the personality and career of Oliver Cromwell that spanned many years. This article will explore how Abbott's interpretation of Cromwell's character, motives and significance developed during the course of a long scholarly career, how Abbott influenced Cromwell's historiographical reputation, and where the edition fitted into what became an almost obsessive interest in the Lord Protector.

Abbott was born on 28 December 1869 in Komono, Indiana, and graduated from Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, in 1892. He then embarked on graduate studies at Cornell, and spent two years in England which led to a B.Litt. at Balliol College, Oxford in 1897. On his return to America, he became instructor in history at the University of Michigan before moving to be associate professor at Dartmouth in 1899 and then professor at the University of Kansas in 1902. Six years later he became professor at Yale where he remained until 1920 when he was appointed Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History at Harvard. He continued to teach at Harvard until his retirement in 1937, after which he was a visiting professor at Columbia (1939) and a research associate at Yale (1939-41). The first volume of his Cromwell edition was thus published in the year of his retirement – also the year that the Cromwell Association was founded – and the last appeared in 1947, the year of his death. Indeed, he completed proofreading the fourth volume very shortly before he died on 3 February 1947.⁴

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During the course of his career, Abbott published several books including monographs on *Colonel Thomas Blood, Crown-Stealer, 1618-1680* (Yale University Press, 1911), *Colonel John Scott on Long Island, 1634(?) - 1696* (Yale University Press, 1918) and *New York in the American Revolution* (New York, 1929), as well as a widely used textbook *The Expansion of Europe: A History of the Foundations of the Modern World* (2 volumes, New York, 1918). He also produced two collections of essays: *Conflicts with Oblivion* (Harvard University Press, 1924) and *Adventures in Reputation* (Harvard University Press, 1935), each of which reprinted an essay on Oliver Cromwell.⁵

Abbott clearly regarded himself as a teacher as much as a researcher, and in 1941 a dozen of his former students contributed to a *festschrift*, *Essays in Modern English History in honor of Wilbur Cortez Abbott* (Harvard University Press). In the foreword, Charles Seymour wrote that ‘a principle that has characterized both’ Abbott’s ‘writing and his teaching’ was ‘a preoccupation with the human aspect of history. For him it is vital that in studying the men of the past, in their various activities and relationships, we should appreciate them as men and not merely as pieces on a chessboard whose moves we record’. This emphasis on ‘the human aspect of history’ may well help to explain why two of Abbott’s monographs were biographies, why virtually all his collected essays were studies of individuals, and why he ultimately came to focus so much of his scholarly attention on one particular historical figure in the form of Oliver Cromwell. Seymour went on to note that Abbott’s ‘recipe for the production of historical students who would and could write was simple: broad reading and constant writing. He used to quote the remark of the Oxford don: “If we can only teach men to read and write we are satisfied”’.⁶ In reviewing this *festschrift*, one of Abbott’s most recent students who was not included in the volume, J.H. Hexter, had this to say: “The essays dedicated to Professor Abbott are random in subject and quality. Yet they are singularly appropriate to the man to whom they are inscribed. ... Professor Abbott has never had a group of disciples shining in the reflected glory of the master. There is no Abbott school of historians. Those who have worked with him stand on their own merit or fall by their own defects. Although there are no “Abbott men”, a student who has worked with Professor Abbott is – bad, mediocre, or good – his own man.”⁷ Certainly Hexter himself, throughout his career, was nothing if not his own man. Indeed, Hexter later claimed that it was Abbott who persuaded him that he needed a second initial and suggested that

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Hexter use Abbott's own 'spare' middle initial 'H': one of Abbott's less celebrated achievements was thus to contribute the 'H' to J.H. Hexter.⁸

A further picture of Abbott in late career may be gleaned from an anonymous student article that appeared in the *Harvard Crimson* in October 1933. This began with the following image: 'A short, squat, bowlegged manifestation of dignity is waddling up Mass. Avenue towards the Square. ... Pausing a moment, he will reach into his pocket, pick out the cigar he had not smoked during some faculty meeting and give it to the blind news dealer. Again the puff, the cane, and the bow legs swing into action, as their owner heads for home. Even the taxi men may smile. They know him. He is "the stout feller with the black stick who lives in the red house on Sparks St."'. Abbott was 'the Squire of Sparks St., the insatiable collector of this and that, the indefatigable narrator of faded stories, the here now admirer of Oliver Cromwell'. The article went on to give a glimpse of Abbott as a lecturer:

Professor Abbott is perfectly comfortable, perfectly at home on the lecture platform. He seats himself in a swivel chair, places his notes and his elbows on the desk, gives vent to a sigh, perhaps even a puff, and begins. Fifteen minutes contain a dignified, non-irritating drone, dedicated to the fact that Gladstone had gained a reputation as a great minister of finance. Then there may be an interruption. The professor will rub his eyes. He will give assurances that the following story is amusing. The story will consume five minutes. There will be renewed assurances that the story was amusing. The lecture will proceed.

The author of the article then observed that at his residence at 74 Sparks Street, 'like Sir Christopher Wren, Wilbur Cortez Abbott has builded his own monument'. The house contained 'all the evidence that one could need for an analysis of his mental processes': 'a beautiful collection of unused chessmen; sundry gargoyles stare out from his walls; there is a mug used at Nicky's coronation [presumably a reference to the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in May 1896]; framed on the wall hang a pair of European Court Fans; on a window seat, in the sun, sparkles a jewel handled Moorish Scimitar; and over there, in a glass case, is a death mask of Oliver Cromwell. Upstairs are the proud portraits of Cromwell and the collection of tools. In

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some dark closet hangs the Frock Coat, which the Professor will don each Sunday teatime'. The author noted, finally, that 'Professor Abbott's interests also include Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*, the movies, Horticulture Exhibits, and Ping Pong', and that 'one is not startled when Professor Abbott attracts some student's attention by planting the black stick firmly upon the latter's abdomen'.⁹ Here, in short, we have a charming pen-portrait of Abbott as he appeared to a Harvard student writer some four years before the first volume of his Cromwell edition was published.

That edition was not by any means Abbott's first publication on Cromwell. As early as 1913, he had published an article on 'The Fame of Cromwell' in the *Yale Review*. This was reprinted in 1924 in Abbott's first collection of essays, *Conflicts with Oblivion*, a volume that was in turn reprinted in 1935. This essay is essentially a review of various assessments of Cromwell's personality and career starting with his contemporaries and moving chronologically down to the early twentieth century. Abbott reprinted this essay again in 1947, at the end of the final volume of his edition (IV, 877-97), this time adding a new two-page concluding section that attempted to bring the essay up to date (IV, 897-9). These new pages were very much the product of a scholar writing in the mid-1940s. Abbott asserted that 'however they differ from each other, all, or nearly all, of [the] latest evaluations of Cromwell have somewhere concealed within them the concept of dictatorship, whether "unwilling", "reluctant", "melancholy" or "sad" or whatever phrase is used to break the force of that unpleasant phrase which has become too common within the past two decades' (IV, 897). Abbott went on to argue that 'it is no mere accident that the past dozen years have seen an extraordinary number of books and articles about Cromwell in German. It is no mere accident that for perhaps the first time there have appeared contributions in Russian. It is no mere accident that comparisons have been made between Cromwell, Hitler and Mussolini' (IV, 898). He elaborated on this general point in the following remarkable passage:

In the same fashion that Napoleon's rise to power helped the people of the continent to understand Cromwell better, so the rise of an Austrian house-painter to the headship of the German Reich, of a newspaper editor-agitator to the leadership of Italy, and of a Georgian bandit to the domination of Russia, have modified our

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concept of Cromwell's achievement, and perhaps our concept of his place in history. It may well be that, as in the past, another generation may see him in an even different light (IV, 898).

Abbott concluded that 'such a man will always have his champions and his opponents. In him many and very different parties may see their ideal. But one thing seems certain: such a man contends not only with his own times but with succeeding generations; once he has entered his tomb he has only begun his struggle for his place in history' (IV, 898-9).

We shall return to the development of Abbott's view of Cromwell as a dictator a little later on when we examine more closely his edition of Cromwell's *Writings and Speeches*. In the meantime, in 1929, Abbott produced his other major contribution to Cromwellian scholarship, namely his *Bibliography of Oliver Cromwell* (Harvard University Press). This was in many respects a more satisfactory intellectual achievement than his edition. It contains over 3,500 items, listed year by year since Cromwell's lifetime, and the compilation of such a work, especially in the days long before internet search engines and electronic bibliographies, was a very significant accomplishment. In the preface to the *Bibliography*,¹⁰ Abbott asserted that 'the stream of Cromwellian literature, which took its rise in the seventeenth century and then grew to such huge proportions, which dwindled somewhat during the eighteenth century and swelled again so greatly during the nineteenth, has shrunk so much in the past few years that it is perhaps fair to assume that the great bulk of such literature has appeared'. The vast amount of work on Cromwell published since 1929 has given the lie to this statement, but at that date Abbott believed that Cromwell 'offers a peculiarly good subject for the bibliographer at this time, as earlier he was a peculiarly good subject for the biographer'. He sought to bring to bibliography techniques that were analogous to those of the natural sciences and he hoped thereby 'to make the knowledge of Oliver Cromwell at least as accessible as that of British lepidoptera or North American echinoderms, to neither of which' he conceived it 'to yield in importance or in interest'. We shall see that this analogy with scientific methods influenced Abbott's approach to his edition of Cromwell's *Writings and Speeches* as well. His *Bibliography* also contained, by way of introduction, an essay on 'The Historic Cromwell' which he subsequently reprinted in his 1935 collection *Adventures in Reputation*.¹¹ This offered an overview of the various primary and

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secondary sources relating to Cromwell's life, but as with his earlier essay on 'The Fame of Cromwell', also reprinted in that collection, Abbott's discussion of how others had viewed Cromwell was combined with a curious reticence about his own opinions and interpretation.

It was only with publication of his edition of the *Writings and Speeches* that we can really chart the development of Abbott's own views of Cromwell in detail. They were most clearly expressed in the prefaces to each of the four volumes and it is worth examining these in turn. It would be fair to say that many biographers, and some editors, fall into the trap of becoming too sympathetic towards – perhaps even too fond of – their subjects. In Abbott's case this became less and less of a problem. Over time he came to regard Cromwell's personality and career with growing distaste as he became ever more preoccupied with the parallels that he thought he discerned between Cromwell and the dictators of the 1930s and 1940s. Certainly he was far from alone in drawing such parallels.¹² Writing in the *Saturday Review* in June 1934, Clive Rattigan described Cromwell as 'a seventeenth-century Hitler-Mussolini rolled into one – the first exponent since classical times of a practical, all-absorbing dictatorship'.¹³ In December 1936, the Professor of Political Science in Cambridge, Ernest Barker, delivered a lecture to a branch of the Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft in Berlin, which was published by Cambridge University Press the following year. Barker wrote that 'the comparison between the German Führer and our English Protector is one which has been pressed on my attention not only in Germany, but also in England', and his lecture concluded with an epilogue in which he drew a series of comparisons between 'the English Puritan Revolution and the German National Socialist Revolution'.¹⁴ That same year, 1937, saw not only the foundation of the Cromwell Association and the publication of the first volume of Abbott's edition, but also the appearance of Maurice Ashley's book *Oliver Cromwell: the Conservative Dictator*. Although Ashley insisted that 'on the whole I have resisted the temptation to indulge in modern comparisons or analogies', his interpretation of Cromwell was influenced by the contemporary category of 'dictator', as was evident both in the book's subtitle and in the title that Ashley chose for his final chapter: 'Death of a Dictator'.¹⁵

In the prefaces to the four volumes of his edition, Abbott's preoccupation with these contemporary parallels became steadily more dominant even

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though he claimed that he wished to remain as impartial as possible. In the preface to the first volume, covering the years 1599-1649, Abbott set out the overall aims of the edition (I, xiii-xx). 'It is not the purpose of the compiler of these volumes', he wrote, 'to take sides in the long and acrimonious controversy which from the days of the great Protector to our own has raged about his motives, his aims, his character and his achievements; to traverse either the verdicts of Cromwell's numerous admirers and apologists or those of any of his critics' (I, xiii). Rather, the objective of the edition was 'to set down as fully and as impartially as possible what Cromwell actually wrote and said, with such comments as may make those writings and sayings more intelligible in the light of their times and circumstances, and our own' (I, xiv). Abbott's aim was thus 'to record, as fully, as dispassionately and as accurately as possible, what Oliver Cromwell wrote and said, set down the circumstances of those utterances, and draw from this and from a small infinity of other sources some explanation, however inadequate, of the Protector's actions and his thoughts' (I, xiv). Abbott explained that he was seeking 'to make as nearly as possible a complete collection of Cromwell's utterances, verbal and written' (I, xv). In addition to the 225 letters and 18 speeches in Thomas Carlyle's 1845 edition, the 75 other documents subsequently added by Carlyle in revised editions, and the 185 letters which Mrs S.C. Lomas added for her 1904 edition, Abbott would include 'more than seven hundred other items drawn from a great number of sources' (I, xv). These new items consisted of 'some five hundred and fifty documents previously printed but hitherto uncollected besides the material in Lomas-Carlyle; as well as some hundred and fifty not printed until now'. These included, 'for the sake of completeness and continuity ... such lesser documents as warrants, commissions, passes and the like, of no great value in themselves but often contributing details of time or place or circumstance which have a certain measure of importance to the story as a whole' (I, xvii). Abbott conceded that 'it is impossible that such a collection should contain all the writings of Oliver Cromwell', and that 'there must have been many orders, notes, letters and commissions which have now disappeared' (I, xviii).

The force of these statements has become ever more evident to subsequent scholars as well as to the editors of the new critical edition of Cromwell's writings and speeches, currently in preparation for Oxford University Press. A major problem with the Abbott edition was that he attempted to make it

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appear as complete as possible whereas in fact it privileged those materials that he could access at Harvard: as John Morrill has written, ‘this is very much the Harvard libraries’ edition of Cromwell, with the advantages and disadvantages of that’.¹⁶ The political instability in Europe during the later 1930s and the approach of the Second World War can only have exacerbated this limitation which was in any case already apparent by 1937. Furthermore, in not setting out at all clearly his principles of selection or his criteria for inclusion and exclusion, Abbott created as many difficulties as he solved. This is especially true of categories such as warrants, commissions and passes where some appear because Abbott could set eyes on them, but they are only a fraction of those that survive. It was a valiant scholarly effort but it made for a problematic edition, and it is also clear from this preface that Abbott had completed all his proposed research for the whole edition by 1937. He gives total figures for the number of ‘texts’ that will be included and a further prefatory note explains that ‘owing to the circumstances of publication, it has seemed necessary to issue the first of these four volumes ... at this time rather than to await the conclusion of the entire work, which, it is hoped, will not be long delayed’ (I, xx).

If the preface to the first volume thus set out the general aims of the edition, the preface to the second volume, published in 1939, revealed much more about Abbott’s methodological assumptions. As with his *Bibliography*, he regarded the methods of natural scientists as a model. He wrote that the plan for the edition had been ‘first to gather all the evidence possible about its subject, then to set it down in chronological order, explaining, in so far as possible, the circumstances and events which might serve to make it more intelligible’ (II, xiii). Abbott asserted that ‘that is a method common enough among scientists, and there seems no reason why the phenomena of the life of a human being like Oliver Cromwell should not have at least as adequate a record as those of fauna generally reckoned far lower in the scale of animate nature, of which “life histories” the literature of biology is full’ (II, xiii). Following the nineteenth-century Germanic school of historical practice associated with Ranke, Abbott’s methods and epistemology were heavily influenced by the natural sciences. He admitted that ‘the scientific parallel is, of course, not complete as we know nothing of the emotional, ethical and moral qualities – if any – of molecules and protozoa’, but he nevertheless felt that ‘it may serve’ (II, xv). This premise in turn led him to accept the possibility of historical truth. Writing many decades before post-

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modernism, Abbott asked: 'who can doubt that, imperfect as all human knowledge is, in history or in any other field, they represent, so far as may be, what we call the truth; or that truth in history is, in the last resolution, the product of what we call scholarship?'¹⁷ In reviewing this volume, Ernest Barker praised Abbott's work as 'likely to be, for many years, a mine for those who quarry to find the exact truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'. Barker likewise lauded Abbott's 'singular objectivity' that enabled him to speak 'with the authentic voice of the scientific historian'. Likening him to Georges Cuvier, the early nineteenth-century French naturalist and zoologist, Barker welcomed Abbott's 'scientific method' and the '*opus scientiae*' that he had produced.¹⁸

This second volume closed with Cromwell's expulsion of the Rump Parliament in April 1653. As Abbott took stock at that point his increasingly negative view of Cromwell was evident: 'The circle had come round at last to arbitrary power again, more arbitrary than before. Louis XVI to Napoleon, Louis Philippe to Napoleon III, Nicholas II to Stalin, Charles I to Oliver Cromwell, the tale is always the same. The dissolution of [the Rump] Parliament broke down the last pretence that England was a free Commonwealth ruled by a Parliament and a Council of State, more or less in accord with the people' (II, 654-5). Abbott was dismissive of Cromwell's own self-justifications and of subsequent attempts to exculpate him: 'That he was merely an instrument in all of this, that he had no desire to play the part of dictator, that he was driven on by circumstances to this hard decision, that he had no other alternative, would have seemed absurd to many, if not most, of his contemporaries, friends and followers as well as enemies' (II, 655). The uncertainty over Cromwell's motives did not change the outcome of his actions. Abbott found it 'difficult to believe that he was wholly devoid of that last infirmity of noble minds, ambition', and insisted that 'whether or not his motives were selfish, whether he sought power for himself merely for the sake of power; whether he was wholly unselfish and sought it as a means to further the divine will as it revealed itself to him; whether the vision came to him at the beginning or just as he neared the goal, in the long resolution of events the result was the same' (II, 655). Abbott acknowledged the complex and at times contradictory nature of Cromwell's personality: he 'had in him qualities of both Prince and Pilgrim. It is not possible to believe that he was wholly black; it is difficult to believe, in the face of the evidence, that he was wholly white. Least of all is it

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possible to conceive of him as gray. ... He was, in short, a complex and elusive character, prince or pilgrim as the case might be, depending, in no small measure, on whether one takes his words or acts as the clue to his real character' (II, 657). It seems that by 1939, as the world descended into war, Abbott was finding less and less to admire in Cromwell.

If volume II appeared in the year the Second World War began, the publication of volume III had to wait until the year it ended. In 1945, Abbott's next preface adopted a more lugubrious tone. He had come to regard the Protectorate as the 'earliest of modern experiments in dictatorship' and he described England in that period as 'a nation ... transformed from parliamentary monarchy to dictatorship' (III, xiii). He felt that his edition, 'far from painting the portrait of a hero', might 'even serve in some measure as a disillusionment', for it tended to reveal 'in the main, often a seemingly dull round of essential if insignificant detail', and to show that Cromwell was 'no less anxious to maintain his own position than to save his country or the world' (III, xiv). In short, 'even a hero cannot be heroic all the time; he cannot always be saving the world' (III, xv). In addition to this view of Cromwell as a dictator, a further theme emerged with increasing force in this third volume, covering the years 1653-5, namely 'that of a tired man, old almost before his time; in poor health; not seldom in bad temper; fighting what even he must sometimes have recognized as a losing battle against the spirit of the people he governed; feared, indeed, but certainly not loved or even universally admired; respected but more often hated; a weary Titan struggling toward his goal ... a tired, ill and harassed old man' (III, xv). Perhaps these last phrases reflect something of how Abbott himself felt by this stage of the project. In his review of this volume, Barker cited this passage and wrote: 'one wonders whether Professor Abbott is not here looking at Oliver through spectacles – the spectacles of a contemporary age of dictatorships (now lying in ruins), the spectacles, perhaps, of his own personal disillusionment'.¹⁹

As this third volume drew to a close in October 1655, Abbott reflected that Cromwell 'had now held the "supreme power" for some two years and a half, but however he may have appeared to foreign contemporaries, or to posterity, all the evidence we have goes to show the great and increasing dissatisfaction with the situation in which the country found itself under his government. ... England did not like a dictatorship' (III, 893). Abbott felt

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that during 1655, the year which saw the Western Design and the establishment of the Major-Generals, Cromwell ‘embarked on the last resource of dictatorship, military rule and foreign adventure. ... He had failed in his great dream of reconciling the country to the substitution of some other system in place of parliamentary monarchy, even Stuart monarchy. It remained to be seen...what could be done to maintain the power he had won, and what measures, if any, could be found to perpetuate it once he was gone’ (III, 893-4).

The fourth volume, covering 1655-8, appeared shortly after Abbott’s death in 1947. He had lived just long enough to finish correcting the proofs, and the volume ended with the forceful new pages on Cromwell as a dictator quoted earlier (IV, 897-9). Abbott advanced a similar view in the preface to this volume in which he described the Protectorate as a ‘military dictatorship’ (IV, xiii). He argued that Cromwell ‘was a military dictator whose rule was more distasteful to the men of his own time – even in his own party – than even the Stuart “tyranny” which it replaced’, and that ‘his immediate methods and results were not so different from those of the dictatorships of our own time as we should like to think’ (IV, xiv). Abbott reflected that it had ‘been generally assumed that Cromwell was in favour of Parliaments; but nothing seems more apparent than that, in fact, he did not like them, that he took every means to avoid them, and that, when he was more or less compelled to summon them, he used every device to keep out of them any who seemed likely to oppose him, and that he had no hesitation in dissolving them when they ran counter to his plans’ (IV, xiv). Abbott again noted Cromwell’s ‘ill health and his failing powers’ during the later years of the Protectorate, and suggested that he was ‘fortunate’ in dying ‘at the moment that his reputation was secure’: ‘had he lived some years longer, it seems that not only could he not have improved his position but that he was in some danger of losing what he had gained’ (IV, xv). These points sum up the essence of Abbott’s interpretation of Cromwell: that this was a military dictator, a hater of Parliaments, and an ill and ageing man. It would be fair to say that more recent scholarship has vigorously challenged all three of these claims, especially in relation to the Protectorate to which Abbott devoted the last two of his four volumes. Cromwell’s historical reputation has to some extent been rescued from the increasingly pessimistic stance that Abbott adopted towards it.²⁰

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It seems both sad and touching that Abbott died just after completing the proofs of the fourth and final volume of his Cromwell edition. Barker wrote that ‘it would almost seem as if Professor Abbott, by dint of living so long with Cromwell, had become disillusioned’, and added that ‘it is somewhat sad that Professor Abbott should have ended on this note of doubt and melancholy’.²¹ Yet, unlike his subject, Abbott at least died in the knowledge that his great project was complete. Sadly, it appears that if Abbott could not live without Cromwell, his wife, Margaret Ellen Smith Abbott (1870-1947), could not live without him. Although Mrs Abbott otherwise remains a very shadowy figure about whom little can be retrieved, we do know that she died a few weeks after her husband in 1947 and was buried with him in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.²²

In many of his assumptions about history as a discipline, Abbott, born in 1869, was a man of the nineteenth century. His historical method – no less than his cane and his frock-coat – belonged to that era. The Rankean influence on Abbott was very strong, and Barker praised him as ‘a balanced scholar who ... just seeks to record what [Cromwell] actually was’, a form of words that closely resembled Ranke’s ideal of reconstructing the past ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’.²³ It was therefore somehow fitting that Abbott’s supreme historical interest was in a figure once described by S.R. Gardiner as ‘the national hero of the nineteenth century’.²⁴ It was also ironic that Abbott did so much to try to erode the image of Cromwell as a liberal icon and to replace it with a much less attractive picture of a dictator. Abbott was a product of the nineteenth century who came to regard Cromwell as a forerunner of the dictators of the early and mid-twentieth century. Abbott thus presents an interesting illustration of the idea that every age rewrites the past in its own image. His dreams of creating a definitive Cromwell edition proved illusory, and the limitations of that edition suggest that a fresh examination of the relevant sources is both timely and necessary.

Indeed, when Oxford University Press (OUP) a few years ago consulted twelve leading scholars about whether a new edition of Cromwell’s writings and speeches was needed, the scholars unanimously replied that it was a high priority. This led OUP to commission a fresh edition in five volumes: the first three will contain the texts of Cromwell’s surviving writings and speeches in chronological order with contextual information and scholarly annotation, while the fourth and fifth volumes will be companion volumes

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offering a range of essays, a chronology of Cromwell's life, maps, genealogies, and other appendices. It is expected that the edition will also be published online in OUP's Oxford Scholarly Editions Online. OUP invited John Morrill to be the general editor, and he assembled a team of volume editors – two per volume – comprising, in addition to himself, Andrew Barclay, Peter Gaunt, Laura Knoppers, Patrick Little, Micheál Ó Siochru, Jason Peacey and myself. A major grant from the Leverhulme Trust funded the appointment of Joel Halcomb, Elaine Murphy and Tim Wales, initially as Research Associates and now as editors. Each of them is associated with one of the first three volumes and works with the other two editors in preparing the texts for their respective volume. As well as this core editorial team, there is an advisory board of other specialists in the field, including Martyn Bennett, Jan Broadway, Colin Davis, Clive Holmes, Ann Hughes, Pádraig Lenihan and Blair Worden. Since the summer of 2011, the project has had a designated office in the Cambridge History Faculty as well as its own website (<http://www.cromwell.hist.cam.ac.uk>).²⁵

This new edition is intended to present, with modern scholarly apparatus, all the surviving material that offers evidence of Cromwell's 'voice'. This in itself presents the editorial team with formidable challenges as to what to include and what to exclude. For example, it is not intended to give the full text of all the routine documents that Cromwell signed but did not himself write, or pro forma documents such as warrants, although it may be possible to summarise the key information from such sources in calendar or tabular form. Wherever possible throughout the edition, we will be trying to establish the 'best' text of each letter or speech and then identify the variations with other versions. Sometimes, however, there are massive discrepancies and no way of determining the more 'reliable' version: Cromwell's opening speech to Barebone's Parliament on 4 July 1653 is a good example of this, and in such – hopefully not too numerous – cases we will have no alternative but to publish all the extant versions in full.

The exact nature of the problems facing the editors varies during the course of Cromwell's career. The first volume, covering the period up to 1649, has to address the issue that many of Cromwell's early letters exist only in later copies, the accuracy of which is often very difficult to establish. There are also complex problems surrounding what to do with the fragmentary summaries of speeches that Cromwell ostensibly delivered in the Long

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Parliament, especially in 1640-2, and the much fuller accounts of his contributions to the Army Debates of 1647, particularly those at Putney. For the second volume, spanning the years 1649-1653, the principal difficulty lies in the fact that Cromwell's official campaign letters from Scotland and Ireland often only survive in multiple printed forms, such as pamphlets and newspapers, with sometimes as many as seven or eight variants. Then in the third volume, covering 1653-1658, we face the issue of what to do with the hundreds of letters and other documents that Cromwell signed as Lord Protector but did not actually compose.

In addressing these complex and intractable problems, we do at least have a number of very considerable advantages over Abbott. We can make full use of modern electronic aids for retrieving and comparing texts; we can work with a specially designed virtual forum for assembling, editing and discussing our documents; and we can harness our website to publicize the project, to appeal for help in finding material, and to set regular puzzles for interested readers. There is still a mountain to climb, but at least we are approaching it as a team effort, aided by modern technology, rather than in the Sisyphean fashion of Abbott's labours.

Those labours, though flawed, were certainly not in vain, and there is still much of interest to be gleaned from reading Abbott's edition and from locating it within its historiographical and political contexts, even if it was very far from being the definitive edition that he yearned to produce. One wonders, with a mixture of fascination and apprehension, what will be written about the present edition in seventy or eighty years' time. If a study day is organised to mark the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Cromwell Association, in 2087, perhaps it will contain some critical reflections on our own current efforts. Maybe in retrospect they will come to seem as much a product of the early twenty-first century as Abbott's edition was of the 1930s and 1940s.

This article was presented at the study day 'Cromwell and the Historians, 1937-2012' held in October 2012.

¹ W.C. Abbott (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47; reprinted Oxford, 1988) [hereafter cited as

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- Abbott, *WSOC*. Throughout this article, page references to this edition will be given in parentheses in the body of the text.
- 2 John Morrill, 'Textualizing and Contextualizing Cromwell', *Historical Journal*, 33 (1990), 629-39.
 - 3 See the reviews of Abbott, *WSOC*, I, by David Ogg in *English Historical Review*, 53 (1938), 309-11, at 309; and by Ernest Barker in *American Historical Review* [hereafter cited as *AHR*], 43 (1938), 372-5, at 373; and Godfrey Davies's review of Abbott, *WSOC*, II in *Journal of Modern History*, 13 (1941), 241-3, at 241, 243.
 - 4 This biographical outline of Abbott's career is based on the obituary in *AHR*, 52 (1947), 648-50, and on an anonymous article 'Portraits of Harvard Figures: Wilbur C. Abbott, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History', *The Harvard Crimson* (19 October 1933).
 - 5 Bibliography of British and Irish History, accessed online, 04/01/2012.
 - 6 *Essays in Modern English History in honor of Wilbur Cortez Abbott* (Harvard University Press, 1941), pp. ix, xii.
 - 7 J.H. Hexter, review of *Essays in Modern English History in honor of Wilbur Cortez Abbott*, in *AHR*, 47 (1942), 329-30, at 330.
 - 8 J.H. Hexter, 'Call me Ishmael: Or a Rose by Any Other Name', in *The American Scholar*, 52 (Summer 1983), 339-53, at 342-4. I am grateful to Clive Holmes for telling me that Hexter also recounted this story to him in person.
 - 9 'Portraits of Harvard Figures: Wilbur C. Abbott, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History', *The Harvard Crimson* (19 October 1933). Abbott's collection of Cromwelliana, including the copy of the death mask, is now in the Special Collections Department of the University of Virginia Library where it was deposited by his son, Charles C. Abbott, between 1973 and 1980: <http://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaxtf/view?docId=uva-sc/viu02896.xml>. I am grateful to Joel Halcomb for drawing this collection to my attention. Abbott's teaching notes – mainly relating to British, European and American history from the late fifteenth century to the early twentieth – can also be found there, as can research notes and drafts for his monographs. I am grateful to Blair Worden for sending me a microfilm of this material.
 - 10 W.C. Abbott (ed.), *A Bibliography of Oliver Cromwell* (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), pp. vii-xi, from which the following quotations are taken.

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- 11 Abbott (ed.), *Bibliography*, pp. xiii-xxviii; reprinted in Abbott, *Adventures in Reputation*, pp. 94-117.
- 12 See R.C. Richardson's very helpful essay on 'Cromwell and the inter-war European dictators', in R.C. Richardson (ed.), *Images of Oliver Cromwell: Essays for and by Roger Howell, Jr* (Manchester, 1993), pp. 108-23.
- 13 Clive Rattigan, 'The great Lord Protector', *Saturday Review* (16 June 1934), p. 698; quoted in Abbott, *WSOC*, IV, 966.
- 14 Ernest Barker, *Oliver Cromwell and the English People* (Cambridge, 1937), pp. 8, 71-96.
- 15 Maurice Ashley, *Oliver Cromwell: the Conservative Dictator* (London, 1937), pp. 7, 311.
- 16 Morrill, 'Textualizing', 630, n. 6.
- 17 Abbott, *Adventures in Reputation*, p. 117.
- 18 Ernest Barker, review of Abbott, *WSOC*, II, in *AHR*, 45 (1940), 859-60.
- 19 Ernest Barker, review of Abbott, *WSOC*, III, in *AHR*, 51 (1945), 109-11, at 110.
- 20 For a cross-section of recent work, see especially Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester, 2002); Patrick Little (ed.), *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007); Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics in the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, 2007); Austin Woolrych, 'The Cromwellian Protectorate: A Military Dictatorship?', *History*, 75 (1990), 207-31, reprinted in David L. Smith (ed.), *Cromwell and the Interregnum* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 63-89; and Jason Peacey, 'Cromwellian England: A Propaganda State?', *History*, 91 (2006), 176-99.
- 21 Ernest Barker, review of Abbott, *WSOC*, IV, in *AHR*, 53 (1948), 530-1, at 531.
- 22 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=16258907>.
- 23 Ernest Barker, review of Abbott, *WSOC*, I, in *AHR*, 43 (1938), 372-5, at 374. On Ranke's phrase, see Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History* (2nd edition, London, 2000), p. 17.
- 24 S.R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649-1656* (4 vols., London, 1903; reprinted Adlestrop, 1988), II, 151.
- 25 This and the following paragraphs draw extensively on the descriptions of the aims and organisation of the new edition posted on this website.

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CROMWELL AND THE HISTORIANS

By Prof Peter Gaunt

‘And if a history shall be written of these times and of transactions, it will be said, it will not be denied, but that these things that I have spoken are true’: Oliver Cromwell and the historians, from Abbott to the present day.¹

On 22 January 1655, just five lunar months since his first Protectorate Parliament had assembled, an angry and disappointed Cromwell summoned the MPs to meet him in the Painted Chamber, to dismiss them and to dissolve the parliament in a bitter speech, alleging that they had squandered their positive and productive inheritance and, through unnecessary and unfruitful constitutional overturning, had created divisions and dangers and given heart to the enemies of the parliamentary cause. His speech opened by reminding the MPs about how hopeful and rosy everything had looked when they had first assembled the previous September, apparently the glorious culmination of ten or twelve years of struggle, with the country and its people arrived at a very safe port, he claimed. Cromwell then recited much of Psalm 78, the Psalm of David, showing how God’s glory and godly achievements should be passed down, cherished and built upon from one generation to the next. ‘This, I thought, had been a song and a work worthy of England... You had this opportunity fairly delivered unto you. And if a history shall be written of these times and of transactions, it will be said, it will not be denied, but that these things that I have spoken are true’.² Cromwell then went on to give a selective and in fact not entirely truthful account of very recent history, a version of events since the previous September which was selective and in places downright false, to justify his angry and abrupt dissolution.

It is sometimes claimed by historians and biographers that Cromwell did not have much of a feel for history. That is not entirely true. In several speeches of the 1650s he recounted the history of the parliamentary struggle since the start of the civil war. He also recommended to his eldest surviving son and heir, Richard, that he study a little history, picking out Sir Walter Raleigh’s rather sprawling but providentialist *History of the World* as especially worthy of study. But Cromwell does not come across as particularly interested in broader history or as someone really historically minded. In speeches and debates, declarations and legislation of the 1620s and early 1640s, MPs often went out of their way to ground their claims in English history, the older the better. The Petition of Right of 1628, for example,

cites Magna Carta and its later reissues umpteen times, the Statutum de Tallagio non Concedendo of Edward I's reign, as well as various statutes and precedents from Edward III's reign. We do not get any of that in Cromwell's speeches in parliament or outside it. Many parliamentary politicians were apt to hark back to the time of the Norman Conquest, when the supposedly golden age of Anglo-Saxon freedom was cruelly snuffed out by the Norman yoke, a yoke which they now were seeking to lift. There is little of this very wobbly history in Cromwell's letters and speeches. At times he referred to current events in the wider world, but references to past European history, such as the French Wars of Religion and the Thirty Years War, are as rare as hen's teeth in Cromwell's letters and speeches. Equally, as is well known, he was just as reticent about his own personal history, and references to his early life in post-1640 letters and in his speeches are very infrequent and often veiled. Like most contemporaries, Cromwell did not see the need to tell folksy stories about his family and family background, his birth, education and upbringing. The sort of dew-eyed and rather nauseous stuff which is almost *de rigueur* for a modern politician had no part in Cromwell's speeches or those of his contemporaries.

So there is no evidence that Cromwell was particularly interested in history beyond the very recent history of the struggle of the parliamentary cause against its enemies. He could be selective, even deceitful, in his speeches and he certainly knew how to use and to deploy propaganda and to manipulate information as Lord Protector, but it was almost certainly both of, and aimed at, the present and the circumstances of the 1650s, rather than drawn from history or with an eye to the future, to legacy, to future historical opinion. Despite the passing comment in his speech of January 1655 already quoted, Cromwell gives the impression of being not particularly concerned about how he would fare and be treated by future historians. Indeed, I often wonder whether he would approve of historians like us today still poring over his life and work and achievements more than 350 years after his death and what he would make of it all.

But of course he did leave a legacy, albeit a mixed and disputed one, and interest in the man and his achievements has not waned in the decades and centuries since his death. Far from it. There remains a vibrant popular interest in Cromwell and the corpus of Cromwellian mythology and

folklore, strong throughout the twentieth century, which shows no signs of waning in the twenty-first. He is a character who very few approach in a completely open and undecided way; most people think they know quite a lot about Cromwell. In popular writing and journalism, in the pronouncements of politicians and commentators, an image of Cromwell is repeatedly conjured up and deployed, for good or ill. Most recent prime ministers have been compared to Cromwell at one time or another – political journalists claimed to detect Cromwellian traits in Margaret Thatcher and to see Cromwellian roots for Tony Blair’s so-called ‘third way’, while a famous cartoon showing a troubled Gordon Brown viewing his predecessor at number ten, apparently in his coffin but in fact still full of life and claiming the right to go on and on, was modelled on the equally famous Victorian painting of Cromwell looking down on the body of the newly-executed and coffined Charles I. I have yet to see a cartoon of David Cameron as Cromwell, but give it time. At the start of the present century, Cromwell came tenth in the BBC poll of greatest Britons, garnering around a tenth of the votes of the overall winner, Sir Winston Churchill, and coming in behind John Lennon and Lady Diana, but narrowly ahead of Paul McCartney and Michael Crawford. I am sure that we are all familiar with the stories of how in the mid twentieth century the bigwigs at Durham University blocked proposals to name a new college after Cromwell, instead preferring the ringing title of Grey College, and of how Tony Benn’s plans to include Cromwell in a new set of stamps depicting all British heads of state from James I onwards was vetoed by the queen and the whole set, which had been fully designed and the artwork completed, was scrapped. On 3 September 1969 the personal column of *The Times* had two entries for Cromwell. One simply noted that it was the anniversary of his death, as well as of some of his greatest victories, and quoted a phrase from the Psalms which Cromwell himself reportedly uttered as he saw victory to be within his grasp at Dunbar – ‘Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered’. But the other entry was altogether less flattering – ‘Cromwell, to the eternal condemnation of Oliver, seditious, traitor, regicide, racist, proto-fascist and blasphemous bigot, God save England from his like’. It is hardly surprising that Cromwell still arouses such feelings, that he generates such strongly-held views in popular culture and that opinions are so divided. He was, after all, the leader of, and the driving force behind, the most revolutionary acts of the English revolution and many of the key issues with which he struggled or is linked remain unresolved and controversial to this

day – the role, power and existence of a monarch and monarchy, of a House of Lords or other second parliamentary chamber, and of the official state church and its composition.

But what of ‘professional’ historians, whether academics based at and employed by universities, or others, whose works draw upon a wide range of primary source material in order to come up with new research-based interpretations of Cromwell, even if they are not themselves university-based academics? – and, as we shall see, some of the most influential biographies of Cromwell of the middle decades of the twentieth century were not written by university-based historians, a trend which has now largely faded, as it is hard to think of important and valuable full-length studies of Cromwell of the last generation or so which have not been written by university academics. If we focus on fairly serious, rigorous, source-based and full-length studies of Cromwell which have been written and published in the seventy years or so since Abbott began producing and issuing his volumes of *Writings and Speeches*, what themes emerge? I think that there are three main traits, which I will cover and explore in turn – the first in detail, the second and third more briefly – before, by way of a brief conclusion, I will close by surveying very recent published work and so exploring where Cromwellian studies might be leading today and in the near future.

Firstly, if we focus on full-length and fairly detailed published studies of Cromwell, it becomes very clear that the appearance of Abbott’s four-volume set did not stimulate a flood of new book-length biographical studies of Cromwell in the years after its publication and completion. In David Smith’s article on *W C Abbott and the Historical Reputation of Oliver Cromwell* (this volume), he explores how wider political developments at home, and more importantly in Europe, prompted a mass of new published work on Cromwell during the 1930s. Focusing on English-language studies alone, by my reckoning over a dozen quite substantial biographical studies appeared during the 1930s – thereafter, nothing like that quantity of new work appeared in a single decade until the very late twentieth century. In the wake of that surge and with the impact and distraction of the Second World War, we would of course expect a lull, but in fact a fairly dramatic post-war famine followed the pre-war feast. Moreover, what little did appear in this period kept its distance from Abbott.

In 1941 there appeared, published by Nelsons and Sons of London, a fairly substantial *Selection from the Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, selected, edited and annotated by Miss L.C. Bennett and dedicated to the memory of the (by then) late John Buchan. A generous selection of texts, arranged thematically, and accompanied by a short biographical sketch and a chronology of Cromwell's life, it may well have been in part a Cromwell Association project, for it carried a three-page foreword by one of the founders of the Association and its then chairman, the Rt. Hon. Isaac Foot. In it, Foot praised the Carlyle collection of the letters and speeches, especially the edition revised and enlarged by Mrs Lomas in 1904, while also proclaiming the merits of the new thematic selection by Miss Bennett. But both Foot in his foreword, and Bennett in her introduction, made clear that the selection had been made, with the publisher's permission, from the Lomas edition of Carlyle's text throughout, even though the first two volumes of Abbott's *Writings and Speeches*, down to spring 1653, were readily available, having been published in 1937 and 1939. The introduction made a passing reference to the Abbott edition as being 'essentially a work for the specialist',³ but offered no explanation for why the material down to 1653 had been taken from Lomas's edition of Carlyle's work, whose faults Miss Bennett duly noted in her introduction and which was still in copyright at the time, so permission had had to be sought from Lomas's publisher, Methuen, rather than taken from Abbott's volumes.

Apart from this volume, the only other new and fairly substantial English-language studies of Cromwell to appear during the war years were a slim volume of sixty pages, and so making more widely available a lecture given to the Royal Society of Literature in April 1944 by Isaac Foot, comparing and contrasting Cromwell with Abraham Lincoln. This was published by the Royal Society later in 1944. There was also a children's biography of Cromwell, written by Dorothy Erskine Muir, a prolific author who produced other biographies, as well as detective stories and fiction aimed at a young readership. It was published by Blackie and Sons in 1945 and, although of limited historical value, it actually gave quite a fair and balanced account of Cromwell's life and achievements, mainly positive and noting, for example, that while Cromwell's Irish campaign included much cruelty towards the inhabitants, as Protector he then attempted to benefit and to rebuild Ireland and its people through his economic policy.

If the dearth of new studies of Cromwell appearing during the war years is understandable, the continuing drought of major new work for the rest of the 1940s and much of the 1950s is, at first sight, more puzzling. The completion of Abbott's *magnus opus* in 1947 and the availability of the texts of Cromwell's writings and speeches and of much more material by or about Cromwell, missing from all editions of Carlyle, should have been the spur to a new wave, even tide, of writing. But it did not happen.

In 1946 Duckworth published a quite substantial though not very original work by Hugh Ross Williamson, comparing and contrasting Cromwell and Charles I. Again, it was not an academic study, for although a very prolific author – between the early 1930s and his death in 1978 Williamson churned out at least fifty books, including several others on the Stuart period which might ring a bell, such as biographies of Hampden, Buckingham, James I, Raleigh and Guy Fawkes – he was also a dramatist, and from 1943 an Anglican clergyman at the high Anglo-Catholic end of the spectrum and in the 1950s he converted to Roman Catholicism. His other works included studies of Eliot's poetry, of the Mass and of assorted saints. His study of Cromwell and Charles I was generally sound and sensible, using some of Cromwell's own words taken from letters and speeches – though again apparently not drawn from Abbott – and reaching solid conclusions, but it offered little that was really new or original.

With this partial exception, the only other substantial and full-length new study of Cromwell to appear down to the later 1950s was the very important biography by R.S. Paul, entitled *The Lord Protector*, though in fact it gave a full account of Cromwell's whole life and career, from birth to death. It was published by Lutterworth in 1955. Robert Sydney Paul was born in 1918, just before the First World War ended, so his study of Cromwell was written by a comparatively young man, still in his thirties. Three decades later, now retired, he published a very detailed study of the Westminster Assembly, seen by many as the definitive account, entitled *The Assembly of the Lord*. A churchman and theologian, long-time assistant director and then director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva, his religious interests and focus shone through his elegant study of Cromwell. While not discounting other formative influences from his early years, nor denying that the later Cromwell was also partly shaped by his military and political experiences during the 1640s and early 1650s, for Paul not only were faith and religion at

the core of Cromwell and the central tenet of his life and career, but also in Cromwell he claimed to have found a fellow ecumenicist, a man who strove to overcome doctrinal differences and to bring groups together to create Christian unity. Although in due course Paul's biography came to be praised and in it we might see a forerunner of the modern historical stress upon Cromwell's religion and the centrality of his pursuit of liberty of conscience from which a new religious coalescence or unity might emerge, at the time it was not particularly warmly received in some quarters. It got remarkably little attention, barely a passing nod, in Paul Hardacre's 1961 survey of historical writings on Cromwell since 1969;⁴ Christopher Hill was initially rather cool towards it, though he later accorded it warmer praise; and it garnered very few academic reviews of any sort, good, bad or indifferent, in the historical journals of the day.

But Paul's biography was, and is, very important in a number of ways. Firstly, it was one of the first studies to undertake really detailed analysis of Cromwell's language and, in its religiously-driven interrogation of key letters and speeches, it set the tone for the type of close textual analysis of Cromwell's (religious) language which has become a key part of many Cromwellian studies since then. Secondly, it was very fully referenced, particularly in terms of its extensive use of primary source material, far more fully referenced than the biographies which had preceded it earlier in the twentieth century, even fuller than the much-regarded biographies by Gardiner and Firth, which in fact were quite lightly and sparsely referenced. Thirdly, and most tellingly for my subject today, Paul was far from enamoured by Abbott's work. He made reference in his introduction to the 'evident' debt which future historians would owe to Abbott, commenting that Abbott's 'exhaustive survey...and Abbott's own great work needs to be given the place it deserves'.⁵ But in fact Paul used Abbott very cautiously and although Abbott's *Writings and Speeches* appeared quite frequently in footnotes, it is surprising how often Paul also supplied a reference to the Lomas edition of Carlyle alongside the Abbott reference. Paul seemed generally to have favoured Lomas where her text differed from Abbott's. In a fascinating appendix, Paul came clean, admitting that while he admired Abbott's 'exhaustive scholarship' and 'American thoroughness', he distrusted the result, as in his view Abbott had failed to understand the centrality of religion to Cromwell and instead developed 'too close an identification of the Lord Protector with the twentieth-century dictators –

an identification which becomes increasingly and embarrassingly marked through his work...which seems to keep pace with America's own increasing preoccupation with the war against dictatorship'. Paul saw Abbott's work as shot through with 'unconscious distortion', which seemed to have made Paul wary about relying on Abbott, even for transcriptions and reproductions of Cromwell's own texts.⁶

Whatever the reaction to the appearance of Abbott's work and subsequent historians' opinion of it, there is probably another reason why so little major new work was published on Cromwell during the 1940s and for much of the 1950s, namely a change in the wider approach being taken to the study of seventeenth-century England in general and to the investigation and understanding of the key issues of the period in particular, including the causes and nature of the English civil war. Beginning in the inter-war period but gathering pace and coming to dominate work on the early Stuart period after the war was a new historical approach, which ignored as largely irrelevant the study of particular political, constitutional and religious problems and tensions in early modern England of the sort which had dominated the work of Whig historians such as Gardiner and Firth. Instead, whether Marxist, neo-Marxist or not Marxist at all, it was fashionable during the middle decades of the twentieth century to view the period as shaped by broad trends and tensions linked to perceived socio-economic changes. In the purest Marxist form, the first half of the seventeenth century saw an inevitable clash and conflict arising from the agonised death of the old feudal order on the one hand and the rise of capitalism, the growth of the middle class(es) and a bourgeois revolution on the other. Herein lay the key to understanding the early and mid-seventeenth century, they argued, not the study of any single man, even Oliver Cromwell.

During the 1940s, 1950s and on through much of the 1960s, much early Stuart scholarship and research focused on exploring and testing these broad socio-economic interpretations, investigating not a single man, however great or powerful, or even a single family, but groups, circles, whole social strata and classes, in order to see whether socio-economic interpretations held water. The focus was on the traditional elites – the peerage and aristocracy, and Cromwell was not one of those – and the gentry or middle classes. Historians such as R.H. Tawney, J.H. Hexter, H.R. Trevor-Roper, Lawrence Stone and Christopher Hill debated and disputed

whether whole groups were moving up or down in socio-economic status and power or whether sub-groups with differing fortunes – mere gentry, rising gentry, declining gentry and so on – could be detected. Cromwell was only a tiny bit-player in this wider gentry controversy or so-called ‘storm over the gentry’. Tawney, in his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, originally published in the 1930s but reprinted in Britain at least seven times between the 1940s and the 1960s, made only a handful of passing references to Cromwell, Hexter almost entirely ignored Cromwell in his contributions to the gentry debate, and while Trevor-Roper made passing allusions to Cromwell as one of the declining gentry of the pre-civil war period, as a ‘country-house radical’ as well as a ‘natural backbencher’ in parliament, he did not figure highly in Trevor-Roper’s contribution to the wider debate, and rumours that he was writing a full-length biography of Cromwell proved incorrect or were unfulfilled.⁷ The only historian who was heavily involved in the storm over the gentry debate and who went on to write a full-length biography of Cromwell was Christopher Hill, and his biography did not appear until the 1970s, by which time the gentry controversy was largely at an end. During the decades when most of the leading historians working on the early and mid-seventeenth century were engrossed by the gentry debate and by interpretations of tensions and divisions within the state and of the causes of the English civil war predicated by this line – whether they were supporting and contributing to this line of argument or were reacting to it and undertaking work to expose its flaws and shortcomings – it is perhaps not surprising that Cromwell suffered a degree of academic neglect.

So, to conclude my first – and most substantial – theme, the appearance of Abbott’s volumes did not give rise to a significant body of new work on Cromwell and did not give an impetus to new research and book-length publications on the man and his career. For various reasons, including the impact of the Second World War and its immediate legacy, trends and fashions in historical research, and in Anglo-American approaches to the seventeenth century and to key issues in that period, together with a distinct academic coolness towards, or reservations about, Abbott and his *magnus opus*, very little substantial new published work specifically on Cromwell appeared during the twenty years, from the late 1930s to the late 1950s, over which Abbott’s volumes appeared (his fourth and final volume was published in 1947) and were newly-available to the historical community.

Most of what did appear over this period made little or no use of Abbott's work – the authors ignored it, deliberately and consciously steered clear of it, questioned its value and kept it at arm's length.

The second theme or trait of the post-Abbott study of Cromwell, shaping work in the mid and later twentieth century, can be covered more briefly, as it has already been touched upon by David Smith in his article *W C Abbott and the Historical Reputation of Oliver Cromwell*' (see this volume). Ernest Barker recalled that in 1936 he gladly accepted an invitation from an old friend to lecture on Cromwell and duly delivered his lecture on the evening of 17 December.

It was a singularly happy occasion. My audience sat at tables, dotted about the room, smoking and drinking beer (it was a social evening); and I lectured all the more happily because I felt that my hearers were comfortable. The lecture was delivered in two parts (the lecturer retiring for rest and refreshment to one of the tables during a brief interval); and I fear that it lasted for nearly an hour and a half. Perhaps only a German audience could have been so generous and so patient, and I owe a very deep debt of gratitude to all who listened to me for the honour of their attention.⁸

The lecture was given in Hamburg at the invitation of a local academic and civic dignitary. In his preface to the printed version, Barker went on to apologise for his comparisons between the English revolution and events underway in Germany and between Cromwell and Hitler – 'I can only plead that the comparison between the German Führer and our English Protector is one which has been pressed on my attention not only in Germany but also in England'.⁹ Barker went on to say how proud he was to have lectured in the Hamburg area, as that was where the English themselves had come from 1500 years before. As well as the main lecture, in the resulting book Barker added a substantial epilogue, further exploring similarities between the English puritan revolution and the German National Socialist Revolution, seeing many similarities between the two and between Cromwell and Hitler, while also stressing some differences, especially the power of Cromwell's personal faith and his desire for religious toleration and plurality.

Ernest Barker, a political theorist and academic, was highly critical of both Nazism and Marxism in the inter-war period, but he also strongly supported Chamberlain's appeasement policy and wanted 'realism' in maintaining good British relations with Hitler's Germany. Hence the visit to and lecture at Hamburg at the end of 1936 and the resulting study of *Oliver Cromwell and the English People*, published by Cambridge University Press in 1937, which makes such uncomfortable reading today. Yet, as we have already heard, he was one of many Cromwellian historians of the 1930s who portrayed Cromwell in this light, in the mould of the contemporary European dictators. So another feature of the post-Abbott historiography of Cromwell, my second main theme today, is how several of those historians subsequently recanted and returned later in the century to Cromwell, producing very different published portraits of the man and his career. I will focus on and explore two historians who published studies of Cromwell before the Second World War and who returned to him in a very different light two or three decades later.

One such figure was Maurice Percy Ashley. Born in 1907 and a brilliant student, he undertook a doctorate on Cromwell's financial and commercial policies during the Protectorate. But to his disappointment, an academic career did not follow. Instead, during the 1930s he worked as Churchill's research and literary assistant and also began producing journalist-type pieces for *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Times*. In 1934 he published his first book, springing from his doctoral thesis and thus reflecting on aspects of Cromwell's Protectorate government and policy. But much more importantly, three years later, in 1937, he published with Jonathan Cape a detailed 350-page biographical study of Cromwell. Its title, *Oliver Cromwell: The Conservative Dictator*, and the closing chapter, called 'Death of a Dictator', reveal and confirm that this was a biography written very much with an eye on contemporary European affairs and heads of state, and to some extent Ashley's Cromwell was portrayed in that light.

Twenty years later, having served in intelligence during the Second World War, with far more extensive journalistic experience and having become deputy editor of *The Listener* – he would shortly become its editor – Ashley wrote and published through Hodder and Stoughton a very different biography of Cromwell. Even in its title, it reveals how Ashley's views had moved on, from *Oliver Cromwell: The Conservative Dictator* to an examination of

The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell. In it, Ashley admitted that his earlier biography 'was profoundly influenced by the rise of Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin and by many years of Conservative government in Britain' and that now, knowing 'more about Cromwell (and recent dictators) than I did then,...the emphasis of the present book is different'.¹⁰ Indeed, Ashley's extensively rewritten 1957 biography, plus further studies on Cromwell which he continued to write into old age, gave a far more balanced view of Cromwell, more sympathetic, stressing more strongly his faith, his religious goals, his attempts to win over friends and his inclusivity, and his many positive achievements. Talk of dictatorship and comparisons with contemporary European or world politics and politicians were rare and muted in these later works. (It is also noticeable that by the late 1950s the earlier reservations concerning, and squeamishness about relying upon, Abbott seemed to have been fading, for in his new biography Ashley praised Abbott's four volumes as 'an indispensable work [and] all the verbatim quotations in the present book for which sources are not indicated will be found in Abbott'.¹¹)

Cicely Veronica Wedgwood was a near contemporary of Ashley, born three years after him in 1910 and also dying three years later than him, in 1997. She, too, was a distinguished student, who studied at Oxford in the late 1920s and early 1930s, but she did not pursue an academic career – at that time, still a difficult path for women – and instead, like Ashley, she focused on a literary and journalistic career, working at Cape publishers, writing for *The Times* and *The Telegraph* and for several years editing a feminist weekly review, *Time and Tide*. Like Ashley, too, she began having her historical work published quite early in life – by 1938, still in her late twenties, she had published two widely-respected books, a biography of Thomas Wentworth, first Earl of Strafford, and a history of the Thirty Years War. At the end of the 1930s, she was asked to write a shortish biography of Cromwell, which was published by Duckworth in 1939, on the eve of war, in their 'Great Lives' series. It remained in print and was occasionally reissued down to the early 1960s. Around 1970 she was invited to update it for a new edition, which duly appeared in 1973, but on revisiting the text of her early career, Wedgwood was horrified and discovered that it needed to be almost completely rewritten – indeed, comparison of the two texts reveals that little from the 1939 edition survived unchanged in the 1973 edition.

In Wedgwood's case, far more than in Ashley's, we know exactly how she felt about her 1930s view of Cromwell in the post-war era and why she thought it necessary to undertake such extensive revisions and rewriting, for she discussed and analysed the process in her address to the Cromwell Association's 1972 AGM, in a lecture entitled 'Cromwell After Thirty Years', subsequently printed by the Association. She noted that the text needed such revision in part simply because she was much older and more experienced and her own perspectives had changed, in part because the primary sources were now much fuller, thanks to the appearance of the Abbott volumes – again, no hint of criticism of or reservations about Abbott now – and in part because other studies of Cromwell had appeared and had to be taken into account; she dutifully picked out Ashley's biographical studies as particularly important, tactfully praising the then president of the Association at its AGM. But even more crucial, she admitted, was the change in atmosphere, of the 'climate of opinion' in which she wrote. She noted a mixture of horror and dismay on discovering just how much her biography of the late 1930s reflected 'the rise and apparent triumph of the dictatorships...which cast a lurid and misleading light backwards on to the figure of Cromwell'. Wedgwood spoke of 'this ugly discolouration of Cromwell's image' which had pervaded her own 1939 biography – though in fact, of the various studies of Cromwell in the 1930s hers was far from the biography which adopted this perspective most strongly and most explicitly and Wedgwood noted that 'I had at least avoided open references to Hitler and Mussolini, but there were numerous oblique comparisons'. Wedgwood also noted that this perspective had since faded, though she felt it continued in the popular mind into and through the 1950s. She thought that her 1939 text both drew too many comparisons with the European dictators of the day and was misguided in spending too many words and too much space on the defensive on that topic, highlighting contrasts as well as similarities between Cromwell and the contemporary dictators of Europe. But in her 1972 address she then continued with some rather odd stuff, repeatedly highlighting the 'politically restless and morally permissive society' of the early 1970s, how 'the basic self-confidence and the basic political and moral codes which still held good in 1939 have given way by 1972 to something like moral anarchy', the loss of an age when people could be confident that 'right would win against might and that the English would be in the forefront of the battle' – so much for the Scots and the Welsh. She suggested that in the 1970s

historians, having set aside the image of Cromwell as an inter-war dictator, could and should approach and portray Cromwell in this new light, as he too ‘lived in a period of violence and doubt and change, of fierce moral speculations and revolutionary ideas, ... a period when it seemed at times that society was perilously near to a descent into anarchy’. Cromwell’s fight against the abandonment of morals and the approach of anarchy, Wedgwood claimed, should have resonance in the present day and ‘give him a new contemporary meaning to us in 1972’.¹² It is all rather strange and one wonders whether in approaching Cromwell anew in the early 1970s Wedgwood – by now a senior establishment figure, showered with honours, including the Order of Merit, and chairing various worthy committees – had put aside the misleading context of the 1930s only to adopt a new set of obsessions which tell us more about how she viewed the 1960s and early 1970s than about Oliver Cromwell.

If retreat from ‘Cromwell the dictator in the mould of the inter-war European dictators’ is my second post-Abbott trait, the third and final trend in serious and substantial historical studies of Cromwell since Abbott’s day has been the very significant expansion of writing and publication on him over the past generation or so, since the 1970s onwards. Only in these very recent decades has the quantity and frequency of new books about Cromwell returned to those of the 1920s and the 1930s.

Other than further work by Ashley, following up but not really bettering or superseding his 1957 biography, not many new full-length studies of Cromwell appeared during the 1960s – a fairly short, military biography, focusing on his military career of 1642-51, by Peter Young; a short 64-page biography by Austin Woolrych in the ‘Clarendon Biographies’ series; and a couple of children’s books, including the lovely and quite balanced Ladybird book. The 1970s saw more work by Ashley, Ivan Roots’s very valuable collection of old and new writings, *Cromwell: A Profile*, and two biographies which in different ways became very influential – Christopher Hill’s pithy and provocative *God’s Englishman* and Lady Antonia Fraser’s *Cromwell: Our Chief of Men*, certainly very weighty and detailed, remaining in print since it first appeared in 1973, and not only still the best known and most influential study outside academic circles but also unusual in the modern era for being written by someone who was not a university-based academic. Cromwellian studies gathered pace during the 1980s and 1990s and published works have

shown no sign of slackening in the opening years of the twenty-first century. Biographies and edited collections have appeared in substantial numbers, almost all of them by academic historians, including Andrew Barclay, Martyn Bennett, Barry Coward, Colin Davis, Peter Gaunt, Ian Gentles, Patrick Little, Alan Marshall, John Morrill, David Smith and others. Of all these works from the 1960s onwards, Hill's *God's Englishmen* is very unusual, written by an author much older than the others, with a pedigree of research and publication stretching back to the mid twentieth century, but also a biography reflecting his own left-wing and radical perspectives, finding much to admire in the Cromwell of the civil war and the 1640s but seeing him then going off the rails, drifting to the right, abandoning the pursuit of radicalism and increasingly becoming conservative and even dictatorial during the 1650s. Hill's interpretation is exceptional, however, for it is remarkable how most full-length academic studies of the recent decades have taken a similar and broadly or strongly positive approach to Cromwell. All rely heavily on Cromwell's surviving letters and speeches, now generally taken from Abbott's edition rather than from Carlyle and Lomas, and to a greater or lesser degree thus allowing Cromwell to speak for himself. Although recent works stress slightly different aspects of the man, focus on different phases of his life and career, incorporate a few new or unusual sources and come up with some new or additional information, they largely conform to the same overall pattern. Over the past generation or so, Cromwellian studies have fairly consistently portrayed a man of sincere faith pursuing godly ends, radical to the end despite the distraction and temptation of settling for the status quo and of healing and settling, a man without much personal ambition and largely uncorrupted by power and material things. Cromwellian scholarship almost seems stuck in the rut of slightly cosy and positive consensus, and even those authors and editors who at the outset claim to be taking a different approach and to be throwing new light on particular incidents, developments or periods, in the end largely conform to the now well-established consensus. Can it last and, while it does, is this a healthy or productive phase of Cromwellian historiography?

If, by way of conclusion, we review important new work on Cromwell which has appeared over the past decade or so, during our current century and millennium, does it give us any hint about where Cromwellian studies may be heading in the near future? There has been important and valuable work on Cromwell's early life, throwing new light on the pre-civil war man

and his career and on his personal, religious and political affinities.¹³ His record in handling Ireland, particularly during his military campaign of 1649-50, has continued to attract attention and still strongly divides historians, with recent published accounts ranging between attempts to rehabilitate him and to stress his honourable actions and his adherence to the rules of war on the one hand, and a portrait of Cromwell in Ireland every bit as black as the blackest late nineteenth-century nationalist image of the man on the other, together with a more cautious and less loaded middle-of-the-road account.¹⁴ Although Cromwell's role as a military figure and his relationship with the army during the 1650s deserves more work, a detailed study of his handling of the Major Generals during 1655-57 has painted a rather uncertain figure, dithering and drifting as the system came under fire at the end.¹⁵ Focusing on Cromwell as Protector, we have had a lot of interesting new work on both his and his regime's image,¹⁶ on their culture and cultural activities (broadly as well as narrowly defined)¹⁷; and, with a more political and governmental focus, we have some questioning of Cromwell's constitutionalist outlook and approach and of his abiding by the written constitutions and constitutional limitations placed upon him, and instead an attempt to move back towards the older image of an all-powerful Lord Protector who ruled through the military.¹⁸ But perhaps the most interesting and suggestive new work on Cromwell to appear in recent years is a chapter-length reassessment by Ronald Hutton, not entirely iconoclastic, praising and reinforcing some recent work, but altogether less reverential and more challenging than most of the portrayals of Cromwell over the past generation or so. Most pertinently, perhaps, Hutton questions whether the approach adopted by most recent historians, of resting so heavily upon Cromwell's own words and of allowing him to speak for himself through his surviving letters and speeches is 'quite proper' and amounts to good and robust history. The very thorough and perceptive study of the letters and speeches, by Worden, Morrill and others, certainly provides an understanding of what Cromwell wanted people to think of him, Hutton suggests, and a valuable insight into how he 'employed and manipulated a set of images and ideas', but little more than that. In challenging the conventional approach to Cromwell adopted by, and central to, the work of almost all historians – including myself – over the past generation or more, Hutton also lays down a challenge to how Cromwell's own words, whether garnered from the Abbott volumes of 1937-47 or drawn from the major new edition of Cromwell's 'voice' currently in preparation and due to be

published later this decade, can and should be employed by historians, just as his rather sharper and far less reverential image of Cromwell might shake up the generally positive consensus of recent years and open up different routes for future study and debate.¹⁹

This article was presented at the study day ‘Cromwell and the Historians, 1937-2012’ held in October 2012.

¹ This version of a lecture given at the Association day-school in October 2012 has been slightly tidied-up for publication, including restoring a little material dropped on the day as time became pressing and very lightly referencing the piece, generally no more than to give sources for direct quotations. However, it has not been extensively revised and so retains the feel of a paper delivered orally, complete with occasional colloquialisms and use of first person singular.

² I. Roots, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1989), p. 58.

³ L.C. Bennett, *A Selection from the Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1941), p. 6.

⁴ P.H. Hardacre, ‘Writings on Oliver Cromwell since 1929’, *Journal of Modern History*, 33 (1961).

⁵ R.S. Paul, *The Lord Protector* (London, 1955), p. 13, though here Paul seems to be referring to Abbott’s earlier published bibliography of Cromwellian material as much as to the *Writings and Speeches*.

⁶ *Ibid.*, appendix eight, ‘Professor W.C. Abbott and Oliver Cromwell’, pp. 415-17.

⁷ Trevor-Roper, as quoted in C. Hill, *God’s Englishman* (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 261 and see his own *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (London, 1967), *passim*. He did, of course, study Cromwell in other contexts, including an important article/chapter on his relationship with parliament 1640-58, reprinted in *ibid.*

⁸ E. Barker, *Oliver Cromwell and the English People* (Cambridge, 1937), pp. 7-8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰ M. Ashley, *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1957), p. 23.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² C.V. Wedgwood, ‘Cromwell After Thirty Years’, *Cromwelliana* (1972), pp. 8-11.

- ¹³ See especially S. Healy, ‘1636: the unmaking of Oliver Cromwell’ and S. Roberts, “‘One that would sit well at the mark’”: the early parliamentary career of Oliver Cromwell, 1640-1642’, both in P. Little, ed., *Oliver Cromwell, New Perspectives* (Basingstoke, 2009) and A. Barclay, *Electing Cromwell: The Making of a Politician* (London, 2011).
- ¹⁴ T. Reilly, *Cromwell: An Honourable Enemy* (London, 2000), a new and revised edition of which is rumoured to be preparation, rehabilitates Cromwell, while M. Ó Siochrú, *God's Executioner: Oliver Cromwell and the Conquest of Ireland* (London, 2008) paints him in the darkest of colours. J.S. Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland* (Dublin, 1999), while a little older, provides an account resting somewhere between the two.
- ¹⁵ C. Durston, *Cromwell's Major Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2001). Henry Reece's *The Army in Cromwellian England, 1649-1660*, due to be published early in 2013 and keenly awaited at time of writing, may throw new light on Cromwell and the military during the 1650s.
- ¹⁶ See especially L.L. Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait and Print, 1645-1661* (Cambridge, 2001) and the relevant parts of K. Sharpe, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven, 2010), while there is also much on this theme in N. Greenspan, *Selling Cromwell's Wars: Media, Empire and Godly Warfare, 1650-1659* (London, 2012).
- ¹⁷ Much of it drawn together in P. Little, 'The culture of the Cromwellian court', *Cromwelliana*, series II 6 (2009) and reprinted in P. Gaunt, ed., *Cromwell Four Centuries On* (London, 2013).
- ¹⁸ See especially, arguing for the powerlessness of the executive council, B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell and the council', in P. Little, ed., *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), another version of which is to be found in Worden's *God's Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 2012).
- ¹⁹ R. Hutton, *Debates in Stuart History* (Basingstoke, 2004), chapter 4, especially pp. 97-101.

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MEMORIALISING CROMWELL: HOW CROMWELL HAS BEEN REMEMBERED BY THE ASSOCIATION AND OTHERS

By John Goldsmith

From its beginning the Cromwell Association has always been concerned about memorials, physical monuments in public places, that ensure that Cromwell is properly remembered in places associated with him; but the Association has never had, nor sought to have, a monopoly on memorialising the Lord Protector. There were monuments to Cromwell long before 1937 and many after which have nothing to do with the Association's endeavours. This paper offers some thoughts on the different phases there have been of memorialising Cromwell, and, from the 1930s, what the role of the Association has been, and poses some questions about what it might be in the future.

What would Cromwell have thought of a monument to himself? Cromwell would have been shocked and appalled at the idea of pieces of stained glass depicting him in places of worship, as they appeared in non-conformist chapels towards the end of the 19th century. But a statue of himself, in his lifetime, in a secular or ceremonial context - would that ever have been considered?

Certainly there was a precedent with representations of both James I and Charles I being created in their lifetime – and as head of state, the Lord Protector after 1653, would it ever have been considered? The statue of James I at Apethorpe Hall in Northamptonshire for example, and Le Sueur's magnificent equestrian statue of Charles I (originally sited at Charing Cross, and now in Trafalgar Square) would have provided parallels.

The Dunbar Medal is the only instance known where there is reliable evidence of Cromwell's own view of his image: 'it will be very thankfully acknowledged by me if you will spare the having of my effigies in it'.¹ Regardless of his protestation (or was it false modesty?) the medal was produced. Clearly he sat for portraits, even if he never said 'warts and all' to Sir Peter Lely. Cooper and Walker at least painted him from life, and miniatures of Cromwell were dispensed as Protectoral gifts, so why not a statue or memorial to his greatness as Lord Protector? Perhaps the answer to that lies in his response to the Dunbar Medal: 'spare the having of my effigies' – though we should be cautious as 'effigy' in the 17th century referred probably to any representation.

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Cromwell knew his Bible, which Bible exactly is an entirely different question, and constantly sought guidance and reassurance from biblical texts, and the Bible is quite clear about carved images and the answer is 'no'. A painting may have been acceptable, a medal perhaps marginal, but a three-dimensional figure is clearly not allowed. There are a number of biblical references that would have guided Cromwell over this that are categorically opposed to the creation of carved images. For example *Exodus 20:4* 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image' or *Leviticus 26:1* 'You shall not make idols for yourselves or erect an image or pillar'. The iconoclasm of the 1640s was theologically sound if aesthetically barbaric. A statue is too close to an idol for comfort, and it would have been more than modesty, false or otherwise, that would have dissuaded Cromwell from having a statue created of himself.

And yet there is a lingering and tantalising doubt that no statue of Cromwell was commissioned in his lifetime, with or without his blessing. A secondary source, published in 1898, claims with some detail that the 'dignitaries of Edinburgh' became so enamoured with republican rule that a large statue of Cromwell was commissioned late in the Protectorate. A block of stone was unshipped at Leith with the intention of creating an image of Cromwell, but no sooner was the stone delivered than the news arrived of Cromwell's death, so the project was put on hold and never completed. The stone was moved towards the end of the 18th century and formed part of an antiquary's collection, but after his death it was broken up. The sources for this are all late 19th century and nothing contemporary has yet been found to lend credence to the account. But could it be true?²²

The first memorial to Cromwell is a wholly negative one, and the background to it is bizarre. It is the statue installed at Stock's Market, on 30th May 1672, to celebrate the anniversary of Charles II's restoration in 1660. The statue was a gift from Sir Robert Vyner, a member of the Goldsmiths Company, knighted in 1665, and in effect the King's banker, not that it did him a great deal of good. Vyner lent enormous sums to the crown, only to have the Exchequer closed on him in January 1672 when he was owed about half a million pounds. That was the actual amount not an equivalent amount at today's values. Despite this move, and a move which did eventually bankrupt him, he gave the statue of Charles II triumphing over Cromwell to the City of London. But even that was not

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straightforward as the statue had been created for an entirely different purpose with different subjects. It was created to show King John Sobieski of Poland trampling on a representative Turk. The statue was commissioned in Italy by the Polish ambassador to the Court of King James but on completion could not be paid for. Vyner, hearing of this, asked his agent in Livorno to intervene and buy it on his behalf and have it shipped to London. It was then altered to show Charles II trampling on Cromwell, though the Turk's turban was never removed so Cromwell appears wearing Turkish head-dress. There is some dispute over how much was altered and how much added, but there is consensus that the work of improvement was undertaken by the sculptor Jasper Latham, who also worked on St Paul's and Temple Bar. The statue was put on top of a massive water conduit at Stocks Market where it remained until 1736, when it was taken down to make way for the Mansion House, the residence of the Lord Mayor of the City of London. It was returned to the family in 1779 and they took it to their Lincolnshire estate at Gautby and re-erected it, and just over a hundred years later it was moved to Newby Park near Ripon where it still stands, much degraded but still recognisably the statue of 1672.³

Andrew Marvell is credited with several satirical verses about the statues (at Newby Park and Trafalgar Square) being in dialogue with each other. The Stock's Market horse said to the Charing Cross horse:

One of the two tyrants must still be our case,
Under all who shall reign of the Stuart's race.
De Wit and Cromwell had each a brave soul,
I freely declare it, I am for old Noll;
Tho' his government did a tyrant resemble.
He made England great, and his enemies tremble.⁴

The likelihood of any further public memorials to Cromwell, positive or negative, being created or commissioned in the 18th century was, not surprisingly, slight, but some fine busts were created as interior pieces for display, though not for public exhibition. The 18th century was neither a time when Cromwell was celebrated by historians or politicians, and nor were commemorative statues a significant form of public art. Both were to follow in the 19th century.

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Cromwell was not the only, nor the first individual to be commemorated as a hero of the Parliamentary cause. As Blair Worden has succinctly expressed it, ‘the credit for the Roundheads’ achievements did not go entirely to Cromwell’.⁵

The discussion about putting a statue of Cromwell at Westminster, during the rebuilding of the Palace following the destruction of the old one by fire, has been recorded elsewhere, but the debate in 1845 did prompt a widespread discussion about celebrating Cromwell. The decorative scheme that was agreed for Westminster included statues of Hampden and Selden, looking opposite to Clarendon and Falkland, their Royalist opponents. Before 1845, also the year that Carlyle’s *Letters and Speeches* was first published, for many, John Hampden was the key figure to be celebrated on the Parliamentary side. He had the benefit of a principled resistance to Ship Money, and a brave and prompt death on the battlefield at Chalgrove, and it is to Chalgrove where you must look to find the first of the 19th century monuments to the Parliamentary heroes of the English Civil War. The obelisk at Naseby does admittedly predate the Chalgrove memorial by about twenty years, but it is a monument to the battle, not of the battle or any individual.

The Chalgrove monument was the result of the enthusiasm of the Whig politician George Nugent Grenville, the 2nd Baron Nugent, who unveiled the memorial on 19 June 1843, two years before *Letters and Speeches* was published. Grenville had previously published his own substantial book on Hampden in 1832, a book which went through several editions during the 19th century.⁶ Hampden, before Carlyle published, was the hero figure for the Whig celebrants of the achievements of the Parliamentary side of the civil war. The Hampden Club was formed even earlier in 1812 for the promotion of a wider and fairer franchise, and although entirely different in character and purpose from the Cromwell Association, it is of interest that as an organisation named after a 17th century Parliamentary hero, it predates the Cromwell Association by well over a century.

The debate over whether or not Cromwell should be commemorated in stone at Westminster ultimately came to nothing in the 1840s, though it prompted some dedicated campaigning which peaked in 1849, the 250th anniversary of Cromwell’s birth. George Dawson, a significant Birmingham

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based non-conformist preacher, made the case in the Birmingham Mercury on 7 April for a 'People's Statue to Cromwell':

Let a society be formed at once in every important town for collecting contributions', he encouraged. 'London of course is the proper abiding place of so national a memorial; after the metropolis Huntingdon his birthplace or Naseby Field has the best claim to entertain a memorial of him. And then on some smiling fragrant flowery April 25th, his birthday, or on some sunny and glorious June 14th, the day of Naseby fight, or better still on some soft bright September 3rd his own fortunate day...let lovers of the "good old cause" gather together from all parts of England to inaugurate the statue.

Dawson died in the 1870s and never saw a memorial at any of his suggested locations. It took over 150 years before all three of his proposals were completed. Dawson was a friend of Carlyle and it is worth noting Carlyle's own opinion of the merit of a Cromwell statue and Dawson's spirited appeal. There had been a campaign in St Ives, near Huntingdon, for a statue of Cromwell, which had inspired stirring lines to be written by Paxton Hood in a verse entitled *'The farmer of St Ives'*, with the refrain:

Raise up, raise up the pillar some grand old granite stone
To the king without a sceptre, a prince without a throne
To the brave old English hero who broke our feudal gyves
To the leader of the good old cause, the farmer of St Ives.⁷

The advocates of a statue in St Ives wrote to Carlyle to enlist his support and he responded to the Reverend Isiah Knowles Holland (sic) on 16 April 1849 making reference to Dawson's article. Carlyle was cautious about the purpose and value of public statuary and had previously stayed out of the debate over the value of a Cromwell statue. His concern was that the current fashion for public memorials was debased by those of figures such as Hudson, the railway magnate, being honoured in this way. He developed his arguments in one of his Latter Day pamphlets published the following year under the title of Hudson's Statue, which is positively vituperative, 'Good will never be got of these brazen images in their present form'.⁸ His reply to Reverend Knowles was more accommodating of the St Ives'

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proposals as he interpreted its purpose not to honour Cromwell, but to mark the town's 'indisputable connection' with him. To Carlyle the most important thing was that the site chosen should without any doubt be a spot related to Cromwell, such as the Market Place, where indeed over fifty years later a statue was finally placed.⁹

Carlyle's position on statues, and the rationale for their siting and selection, is one which, without necessarily being aware of it, the Cromwell Association has chosen to follow. The rationale for the three other free-standing statues of Cromwell put up in the latter part of the 19th century in England would not have met Carlyle's criteria.

From the 1840s onwards there was a strong growth in the overall numbers of commemorative statues being erected in London, from eight in the 1840s to double figures in every decade, ending in 1920.¹⁰ Figurative statues were an increasingly popular and accepted form of urban public art. It is not without some irony that figures commemorated by the late 1880s included not only George Dawson in Birmingham but also Thomas Carlyle in Chelsea. As the second half of the 19th century also saw the high-point of enthusiasm for Cromwell it is hardly surprising that this is the period that free-standing statues date from, as well as other representations on chronological, though highly selective historical friezes, such as at Bradford and Harwich.

The Manchester statue by Matthew Noble, now languishing in Wythenshawe Park, was originally in Manchester city centre. Although Greater Manchester was the scene of some vicious fighting and bloody conflict during the civil wars, and Manchester itself a Parliamentary stronghold, Cromwell was barely there at all. The Noble statue was commissioned in 1869 and completed in 1875. Stephen Porter has written about the extraordinary episode of the full-sized plaster model being displayed in Parliament Square in the early 1870s, but the statue was always intended for central Manchester.¹¹ It was the gift of Mrs Abel Heywood in memory of her husband Alderman Heywood, so commemorative function is two-fold. It honoured its subject and it honoured the donor's late spouse.

The second free-standing statue is also in the north-west, at Warrington, a place in which Cromwell was definitely located during the second civil war,

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the statue being the result of the celebrations of Cromwell's tercentenary in 1899. As with the Manchester statue it was the gift of an individual, in this case a prominent civic figure and non-conformist, Frederick Monks. Unlike the Manchester statue there was no long lead time of discussion with the sculptor. Quite simply there could not have been any. The statue is by John Bell, and he died in 1895. Rather like Viner in the 1670s, Monks bought the statue ready-made, but in this case it required no alteration or amendments. The statue of Cromwell had been in existence for some time beforehand. Correspondence about the statue from Bell to a friend throws light on Bell's sources which included a death mask of Cromwell borrowed from the Royal Mint. In a fascinating aside, particularly to those tempted to accept the story about Queen Victoria refusing to go to Manchester because it had a statue of Cromwell, Bell wrote, 'The last time the Queen was here, on looking at the statue of Cromwell, which I am glad to say she much approved [she] told me that at Windsor was the most complete collection of portraits of him in existence'.¹²

Monks had business links with the Coalbrookdale Company of Shropshire which also made a very fine set of gates that he had presented to the town in 1895, but as with the statue, they were not Monks' commission. Both the gates and the statue had been cast by the company over thirty years earlier for the International Exhibition of 1862 as examples of their 'artistic' castings, and were pictured as such in *The Illustrated London News*. After the exhibition the gates and the statue went back to the makers and were left, it seems, in a warehouse. What the company did to try and sell them remains unknown, other than in February 1899, only a couple of months before the tercentenary, Huntingdon Town Council was offered a statue of Cromwell at a reasonable price by Coalbrookdale. The Council opted not to purchase as they determined they had not the authority to do so. That left the way open for Monks to acquire what in all probability was the same statue, and, in an act of generosity, gift it to Warrington where it remains, rather splendid and recently restored.¹³ The Coalbrookdale Company may have had good reasons for not selling it earlier, or it may have been due to ineptitude. The enthusiasm for all things Cromwellian, and the commission to Noble, and later to Thorneycroft, for the Westminster statue, suggests that they might have found a buyer if they had tried. In many ways it is a shame that the Bell statue was not bought for Huntingdon but Huntingdon has always had a difficult relationship with Cromwell.

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The Thorneycroft statue, under which the Association gathers every year for its service of commemoration, is certainly the best known and the most documented of all the Cromwell statues. It was the gift of Lord Rosebery to an ungrateful Parliament, and the decision to place it in the moat next to Westminster Hall provided it with a site that could hardly have been better chosen in terms of its prominence. Rosebery, like Mrs Heywood and Frederick Monks, had his own motives for his benefaction, but it is at least on a site closely linked to Cromwell and his career.

The last of the four free-standing statues in England is the one in St Ives, the fulfilment of plans first made in the 1840s. The statue is distinguished from the others as it is the only one funded by an appeal for public subscriptions, rather than given as a gift from a single individual. The success of the appeal highlights the difference in attitudes between near neighbours Huntingdon and St Ives. Following the Town Council's rejection of the Coalbrookdale Company's offer on the grounds that the purchase of the statue would have been ultra vires, an appeal was launched in Huntingdon to fund a statue for the town. As the company had already found another buyer, and no suggestion was made of any kind of deposit to secure what was available, the Huntingdon appeal was limp to say the least. The lack of drive and the conservative and Anglican nature of the town's governance (for example, the Council declined to attend the Free Church Tercentenary service in April 1899) opened the way for the less constrained and historically religiously radical town of St Ives to launch its own appeal. It is to this day a common misapprehension in Huntingdon amongst older people that the statue in St Ives is the one which Huntingdon turned down. That is untrue. Huntingdon did not really want a statue and St Ives did, so St Ives has one and Huntingdon has not. The sculptor was Frederick Pomeroy who offered two models for selection, and the choice was made to show Cromwell as an ordinary townsman of St Ives. The figure was unveiled in 1901 to popular acclaim, with money left over in the bank after the appeal had paid Pomeroy and the installation costs.¹⁴

The late 19th century enthusiasm for Cromwell which flourished in the wake of Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches*, heightened by the symbolism of Cromwell to the non-conformist and Liberal movements, began to wane soon after the turn of the century. The growth of the Labour Movement meant that new heroes were sought, and apart from cheerful depictions of the Lord

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Protector in stained glass windows in Congregational chapels, the idea of memorialising Cromwell appeared to have had its day.

Whether it was a by-product of the cult of Cromwell, or prompted by entirely different causes and motives, it is undeniable that academic study of Cromwell, the civil wars, the Commonwealth and Protectorate advanced hugely at the end of the 19th and into the 20th century. This was not just as a consequence of historians such as Gardiner and Firth, but was also due to the publication of volumes of state papers and the professionalisation of history, which led to a broader and more complete understanding of the significance of what had happened in the mid-17th century across the whole of the three kingdoms. That understanding percolated through the academic world and out into the wider sphere of the interested and the enthusiast, and it is there that we need to look for the roots of the Cromwell Association and its role in memorialising Cromwell.

Sadly, but not uniquely, the Cromwell Association has sometimes been wayward with its own collective memory. It claimed in its own publicity in the 1950s that it had been formed in 1935, and that its achievements included putting up commemorative tablets at Dunbar, Edgehill and Naseby. Only one of those four claims is true. For an organisation with historical aims that is not very impressive, so how was the Association formed, who by and what for?

The archive of the Association is now kept in Huntingdon Library and Archive along with the Association's library. The administrative papers of the Association, at least for the first 30 years of its existence, are less than consistent and not particularly well-ordered. This probably reflects its modus operandi of the time. The first Minute Book records the meeting held on 15 September 1937, as the first meeting of the Association. Those attending the meeting at the Charing Cross Hotel were: the Rt Hon Isaac Foot, Mr & Mrs Harold Reich, Captain Christie Crawford (sic), Colonel Cawardine Probert and the secretary and minute taker Mr A Russell-Smith.

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None of them were professional or semi-professional historians, though Mr Russell-Smith remains a little elusive. Foot was almost certainly the youngest, at 57 years of age. They were not united by politics or

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denomination. The only common thread is their shared interest in Oliver Cromwell. Exactly how they were brought together is open to speculation. Biographical information is sparse and only Foot has had anything published about his life. The person who may have been the catalyst for the inauguration of the Association was Charles Harold Reich. Reich was the Managing Director of the Ocean Oil Company Ltd which had its offices in Fenchurch Street in the City. When the Association was formed he was living comfortably in Streatham, but his origins lie elsewhere. He was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1873 and his foreign sounding surname is explained by his father Gustav, a naturalised British subject, born in what had become Germany, and who traded as a Russian merchant. Gustav married an Englishwoman and at the age of 70 in 1911, Gustav was living with Charles and his wife Elizabeth, in Wandsworth in South London. ¹⁶What prompted Charles Reich's interest in Cromwell is unknown, but it was a significant interest and something that he was willing to spend money on. Reich was the initiator and benefactor of the Naseby battlefield memorial, unveiled on Thursday 28 May 1936 by his wife Elizabeth. The memorial predates the Association by well over a year and none of the other founding members of the Association are listed in the local newspaper report as having been in attendance at the ceremony. The same report asked the question, 'Why does Naseby Battlefield now possess an adequate memorial given by a complete stranger?' and answered the question by describing Reich as 'an ardent Cromwellian student' who had studied the battle and become convinced that the old obelisk memorial was in the wrong place, and decided to rectify the situation. Reich's choices of words at the ceremony, reported in the paper, are interesting: 'Mrs Reich and I hope that you, your children and your children's children, will remember that here at Naseby occurred one of the most important events in the history of your country'.¹⁷

Note 'your' not 'our'. As a second generation immigrant it appears that Reich regarded himself at least to some extent as an outsider. So the Association has no claim on the Naseby monument despite what the English Heritage Battlefields Register says. Whether Foot knew of Reich before the unveiling of the memorial is itself unknown, but the publicity from the ceremony would almost certainly have made him aware of a fellow Cromwellian.

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Foot was almost certainly already aware of Captain Christy Crawford. On the face of it they had little in common. Crawford was 78 years old in 1937 and was a long-time retired career soldier; so long retired he had not even served in the Boer War. He joined the army in 1881 and had commanded the guard at Hampton Court before resigning his commission ten years later. Crawford lived at Hampton in Middlesex, part of the Borough of Richmond. His house, called 'The Beveree', had large grounds that he allowed to be used for a variety of sporting and social events. Politically Crawford was conservative with a capital C. So how might Crawford's and Foot's worlds have intersected?¹⁸ Crawford was a civil war enthusiast and collector. In 1931 he had given a collection of portraits of civil war personalities to the town of Stow-on-the-Wold where they are still maintained in St Edward's Hall. Stow has a number of civil war connections and Crawford's gift seems to have been prompted by kindness in the town shown to his late wife. The gift to Stow was not the whole of Crawford's collection but it was a very generous one and it created a public collection, albeit not a museum, related to the civil war. Foot would have almost certainly been aware of the collection and its donor.

The reasons proposed here for any connections with Lt Colonel Cawardine Probert are more speculative as his interest in Cromwell was not in any way a public one, unlike that of Reich or Crawford. Again, on the surface Cawardine Probert was not an obvious candidate to be a founder member of the Association. He had an adventurous start in life travelling to Australia on a sailing ship where he became, at the age of 20, secretary to the Prime Minister of Victoria. He returned to England and entered Lincoln College Oxford in 1885. It is not known what he studied, but given his interests in his adult life it is possible that it was history. He could well have come under the influence of Gardiner, and less likely, Firth. Whether coincidental or not he named his son Geoffrey Oliver. Probert served in the Boer War after which he became an equerry and comptroller to the household of Princess Louise, and then in his 50s he served in the First World War at Salonika. He retired to Suffolk where he was the one-time High Sheriff, a JP and member of the county gentry.¹⁹ His interests were broad and diverse: he was active in the county historical societies of both Essex and Suffolk and he part-edited the diary of Ralph Josselin; he restored a medieval chapel and he was interested in English literature. He supported the Keats Shelley House in Rome, and joined that organisation in 1910. He

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was a scholar and an antiquarian with a good library. Perhaps he and Foot may have known each other as fellow bibliophiles. Cawardine's library was good enough to be sold, at least in part, through Sotheby's at his death, and one can speculate that Foot and Cawardine met each other through book sales in the 1920s and 1930s, maybe competing for the same titles of civil war interest.²⁰

The other founder member besides Foot was the secretary Mr Russell-Smith from Edenbridge in Kent, who remains elusive. There was a brief obituary notice in *The Times* in 1951 crediting him with being the organiser of the Association.²¹

The name of Isaac Foot has always been closely linked to the Association; he was created its first president in 1951 and held that office until his death in 1960. Michael Foot, one of his distinguished sons, served as a vice president of the Association until his own death several years ago which broke that link between the Association and the Foot family.

Of the founder members, Foot was the only one who was a well-known public figure outside of his own locality. He was a leading Liberal politician and one-time MP and a Privy Councillor. He fought more general elections than he won, but he was a man of great principle, resigning from his only ministerial post because of his unwillingness to compromise. He was also a prominent Methodist and had been vice president of the Methodist Conference the year before the Association was founded. He was also an advocate of temperance, and a voracious reader, with a huge library, now in an American university. He was also a great Cromwellian. As a young man in London in the 1890s, a colleague had encouraged him to read Green's *Short history of the English people*, a book which he said, 'Helped to make me a Cromwellian'; and an article about the Cromwell tercentenary in the *London Quarterly Review* in 1899, convinced him to be one. Cromwell was the great hero at the end of the 19th century for both the non-conformist and Liberal movements. Foot was both a Liberal and a non-conformist, and he idealised Cromwell's character.²² As a child Foot had seen both the Drake statue erected on Plymouth Hoe when he was four and the Armada memorial four years later in 1888. He was an enthusiastic celebrant of anniversaries; a key feature of the Methodist chapel calendar was the chapel anniversary, and other notable dates. In 1921 as Deputy Mayor of Plymouth he represented

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his city at the tercentenary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

All of the founders of the Association had been brought up and come to adulthood at the peak of the fashion for putting up public statuary; they had a track record of creating, or being associated with, collections and memorials; and they were all apparently ardent Cromwellians.

The Minute Book of that first meeting records that Colonel Cawardine Probert, seconded by Mr Reich, moved that the Association be, and is hereby formed. By the following March a larger more general meeting of 35 members was held where the Chairman, Isaac Foot, 'explained the reasons for initiating the movement which was to perpetuate the memory of the Lord Protector, and enlarged on the need for marking the authentic sites and his battlefields and buildings connected with his life, for the research into contemporary records and for commemorating his great day, September 3rd.²³ If Carlyle had written a manifesto to honour Cromwell it would surely have been remarkably similar.

The first project for a monument was a proposal for a plaque of some kind on Cromwell's old house at Ely, but that was rejected. Not to be dissuaded from their declared task, the Association requested that they might put a memorial stone on the wall of Cromwell's old grammar school in Huntingdon. This was a prescient decision as the building later became, with the Association's support, the Cromwell Museum, which opened in 1962. The stone tablet was unveiled on 26 October 1938 by Lord Sandwich at Isaac Foot's invitation. The plaque is modest, records the fact that Cromwell attended the school, but makes no reference to its donor, the Association.

The following year saw the unveiling of the Marston Moor memorial, the largest of all the memorials endorsed by the Association, and one which led to a fascinating war of words in the letters pages of *The Times*. At the end of May 1939 the secretary Mr Russell-Smith alerted readers to the placing of the new monument on land donated for the purpose, with funds from the Cromwell Association and from the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, and appealed for donations towards the costs of just under £300. All seemed set fair for the ceremony on 1st July, when the week beforehand Lord Fairfax launched a stinging attack on the Association and its claim that the

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Parliamentary army was led by Cromwell, and the omission of his ancestor's name from the memorial: 'In consequence I do not feel that I can subscribe to the monument and I would also like to sever my connection with the Cromwell Association if that is the way they propose to pervert the facts of history', he thundered. Foot replied the following day citing Firth, Gardiner, Hilaire Belloc and John Buchan in defence of the Association's position. Fairfax did not attend the ceremony. The following Monday, *The Times* editorial commented on the memorial and made full reference to the Association, an achievement not equalled since.²⁴

At the following AGM the Association agreed to put a second plaque on the monument making full reference to Thomas Fairfax. Peace was restored, at least between the Association and Lord Fairfax. The same AGM made plans for a service to take place by the Cromwell statue at Westminster on 3 September 1939. Some might say that this was typical of the forward planning capacity of the Association – the service was postponed in the event as war was declared on the same day, and it was another ten years before the first service was held on Cromwell Green.

Certainly the Second World War did not cause Isaac Foot to hold back on his memorialising; indeed it may have increased his resolve to mark anniversaries of those things he saw helped to achieve religious liberty. The anniversary of Pym's death was marked in 1943, as was the anniversary of the battle of Chalgrove and Hampden's death, with the Association contributing to the restoration of the 1843 memorial. The following year a service was held at the Marston Moor monument to mark the tercentenary of that battle, whilst the battle for Normandy raged at the same time.

In conjunction with the anniversaries of Cromwell's military victories, the battle of Dunbar was marked in 1950 with an inscribed granite boulder, and Worcester with an engraved stone the following year. Since then other plaques and memorials have been put up at Bristol, Preston, Hursley and Basing amongst others, with some refusals along the way. The Association, however, does not appear to have any connection with the creation of the Edgehill memorial. Oddly, Edgehill actually has two identical memorials. The first was placed on the actual battlefield and then became enclosed within a secure Ministry of Defence ammunitions store created in 1942. A

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replica monument was placed on a nearby roadside in 1949, outside the perimeter of the store.

The most recent figurative sculpture of Cromwell has nothing to do with the endeavours of the Association. It is under the loggia of the Guildhall Art Gallery in the City of London, less than a mile from the site of Viner's Stock's Market statue. It is displayed along with figures of Shakespeare and Pepys, the choice of subjects decided by some kind of popularity poll of City Corporation employees. The bust is by Cambridge based carver Tim Crawley.

Some memorials have been restored and others are in need of restoring, with some new memorials under consideration. Groups other than the Association have also put up memorials to mark events and places that are connected to Cromwell – for example at Upton upon Severn and Lowestoft. There are also memorials, such as that to the Levellers executed at Burford put up by those who would not support a memorial to Cromwell, but nevertheless mark an episode of the civil wars.

The most recent project undertaken by the Association was the refurbishment of one of the most recent memorials, one that has been walked on: the *Cromwell Quotes* trail in Huntingdon. It was installed as part of the Association's marking of the 400th anniversary of Cromwell's birth in 1999. It consists of a series of incised slabs at sites in the town of importance to Cromwell; places he knew and went to. Brief quotes about Cromwell are inscribed on the slabs, and they are supported by a leaflet with a text by John Morrill who, in 1999, was the Association's president. The lettering is the work of Richard Kindersley. The quotes trail is a more subtle approach than a free-standing Cromwell figure, and as a consequence perhaps more thought-provoking and less confrontational. Not everybody believes that Cromwell should be memorialised.

There are still places closely associated with Cromwell that have no memorial at all. Cambridge, rejecting a suggestion made during the Second World War, is a glaring omission, but there are surely others of equal merit. However, are memorials still appropriate or in any way necessary? Do they have to be physical objects or should the Association be considering

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discretely placed QR codes, or virtual memorials, or is the whole idea of a memorial redundant, passé, and no longer relevant to anything or anybody?

The case for continuing to remember the significance of the events of what happened in the middle of the 17th century in England and what, for the moment, is the United Kingdom, which profoundly affected every county, and every town, is too important to be forgotten. Within that, Cromwell and his role in those events and the aftermath of the Commonwealth and Protectorate cannot, and should not, be overlooked. To that end, the work of the Association in supporting and creating memorials is important and unfinished.

This article was presented at the study day 'Cromwell and the Historians, 1937-2012' held in October 2012.

- ¹ W.C.Abbott (ed), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, four volumes, Cambridge, MA, 1937-47, ii, 391
- ² James Campbell Irons, *Leith and its Antiquities*, Edinburgh, 1898, 115.
- ³ G.E.Aylmer, 'Sir Robert Vyner 1631-1688' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB), 2004.
- ⁴ Andrew Marvell, A poem on the statue at Stocks Market, in: Nigel Smith *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, Pearson 2006.
- ⁵ Blair Worden, *Roundhead Reputations*, Allen Lane, 2001, 230
- ⁶ A.A.D.Seymour, 'George Nugent Grenville 1788-1850' ODNB, 2004
- ⁷ Paxton Hood, *The farmer of St Ives in Oliver Cromwell his lifetimes, battlefields and contemporaries*. London 1898, 397
- ⁸ Thomas Carlyle, *Hudson's statue, Latter Day pamphlet*, 1850
- ⁹ Thomas Carlyle, *An interesting reminiscence of 50 years ago. An unpublished letter of the late Thomas Carlyle to the late Rev.Isiah (sic) Knowles Holland of St Ives*. Hankin, St Ives, 1899.
- ¹⁰ David Cannadine, The context, performance and meaning of ritual: the British monarchy and the invention of tradition c 1820-1977, table 4, in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, CUP, 1983.
- ¹¹ Stephen Porter, A political sculpture? The first appearance of Matthew Noble's Oliver Cromwell. *Cromwelliana* 2001, 39-50.

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- ¹² John Bell, *Memorandum in letters to R.H. Soden Smith relating mainly to Bell's statue of Oliver Cromwell and the latter's death mask*. National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, 86EE84.
- ¹³ www.pdma.org.uk/psma-database/4990
- ¹⁴ Caroline Clifford and Alan Akeroyd, *Risen from Obscurity: Oliver Cromwell and Huntingdonshire*. Huntingdon 2001.
- ¹⁵ *Cromwell Association Minute Book, Huntingdon Archives*, 4874/1. The records of The Cromwell Association are deposited with the Cromwell Collection at Huntingdon Library and Archive. The records contain both manuscript records of Annual General Meetings and printed Annual Reports, but they are inconsistent. Regular meetings were interrupted by the Second World War and the printed reports are sometimes of actions taken by Isaac Foot rather than decisions of the Association.
- ¹⁶ 1881 census, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: 1911 census, Wandsworth.
- ¹⁷ *Northampton Chronicle and Echo*, 5.6.1936
- ¹⁸ *Richmond and Twickenham Times*, 24.7.1948
- ¹⁹ *The Times*, 9.7.1938
- ²⁰ *Catalogue of valuable printed books, autograph letters, historical documents, etc comprising the property of F.J.Seal Esq: the property of the late F.J.Nield Esq: the property of Sir Kenneth Anderson: the property of the late Mrs Acraman: the property of Mrs Cawardine Probert and other properties; which will be sold by auction of Messrs Sotheby & Co on Monday 12th June 1939 and the following day*. Sothebys 1939.
- ²¹ *The Times*, 1.8.1951
- ²² Michael Foot and Alison Highet, *Isaac Foot: a West Country Boy, Apostle of England*. Politicos 2006, 116.
- ²³ *Cromwell Association Minute Book* , Huntingdon Archives 4874/1
- ²⁴ *The Times*, 27.6.1939; 29.6.1939; 3.7.1939.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Gavin Robinson, *Horses, People and Parliament in the English Civil War: Extracting Resources and Constructing Allegiance* (Ashgate, 2012). ISBN 978 1 409420 934; hardback, 249 pp. £65.

Reviewed by Dr Stephen K. Roberts

This book could simply have been a useful addition to the stock of literature about procurement during the civil war. A hint that it is more than that is evident in the last two words of the subtitle. Through much of the book's five chapters, Gavin Robinson takes us through the various expedients and *démarches* by which Parliament provided itself with horses, for personal transport and for the conveyance of artillery and materiel. He does not omit from consideration the king's side, but explicitly draws attention to the fact that evidence for the royalist armies is thin, owing, he surmises, to destruction of records by the losers in the war. Whether this is really so is a point worthy of further consideration, but in any event the author is the beneficiary of the ample resources furnished by The National Archives, relating to the parliamentary side, for this study. There is much serviceable material here about the Propositions, the Monthly and Weekly Assessment, the Fifth and Twentieth Part and the excise, which anyone seeking a guide to how these levies were devised and implemented between 1642 and 1646 could profitably consult. Good use is made of the papers of Parliament's committee for indemnity, which after 1647 became a leading agency for processing claims against the regime.

Wrapped around this administrative history is something altogether more startling, however, which emerges in full form only in the last sentence of the book: 'Nobody actually *was* "a royalist" or "a parliamentarian"'. What does Gavin Robinson mean by this? He argues throughout this book that the various labels applied to groupings in the civil war have a tendency to disintegrate: in the hands of modern historians, just as during the 1640s. With constantly shifting factions and defections (ratting and re-ratting), notions of fixed allegiance become not just blunt instruments (as most historians would agree) but useless tools (which the author stakes out as his own position). He is at pains to dissent from the view ('the traditional determinist model') that the outcome of the civil war was at any point inevitable, but goes beyond this to query whether battles were that important in comparison with the assembling and marshalling of resources: echoes here of A. J. P. Taylor's emphasis on war-by-timetable and railway-

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guns in analysing the war of 1914-18. In showing how Parliament's use of the term 'delinquent' to describe its enemies emerged and evolved, Gavin Robinson demonstrates that 'delinquency' was far from being a permanent condition, and that both parliamentary authorities and those it labelled as delinquents had every incentive to treat the category as a temporary, purgatorial one. The word 'othering' is used in this book to describe the relentless ascribing, to groups of people Parliament feared or anathematized, of names that created a distance. Such 'others' included 'delinquents', 'papists', 'cavaliers' and so on.

'Gender and feminism are as important as animals for my understanding of allegiance', the author insists. The challenging of categories which is an essential dimension of this book is at its most startling when Dr Robinson asserts that by his definition of allegiance as something temporary, contingent and thrust upon individuals, 'we could even begin to talk about animals having allegiance ... Horses actually did things which had real effects regardless of motives and intentions'. He would probably object to my pejorative use of the word 'rat', above. This logic is not pursued, thankfully. In fact, the view of horses in the volume is rather like that from the grandstand at Cheltenham: they hove into focus, fade from sight and then return again. Overall, there is much statistical evidence about the procurement of horses, but very little about horses themselves. Gavin Robinson takes issue with 'anthropocentrism', but has nothing to say about the types of horse, veterinary practice, farriery and so on. Any horses reading this book might consider they have had a raw deal. To end on a facetious note would be unfair, however. Setting aside the tendency to want to shock his readers out of their complacency, Gavin Robinson has written a book which has many valuable insights into the way that the parliamentary authorities not only found and appropriated resources, but responded to attempts to wrest them back.

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David Ross, *Royalist, But... Herefordshire in the English Civil War, 1640-51* (Logaston Press, 2012), pp. xiv + 194, ISBN 9781906663636, £12.99.

James Malcolm Gratton, *The Parliamentary and Royalist War Effort in Lancashire, 1642-1651* (Chetham Society, 3rd series 48, 2010), pp. xxxiv + 381, ISBN 97809955427619, £24.95.

Robert Matthews, *'A Storme Out of Wales': The Second Civil War in South Wales, 1648* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), pp. xx + 202, ISBN 9781443835213, £39.99.

P.R. Hill and J.M. Watkinson, *Cromwell Hath the Honour, But... Major-General Lambert's Campaigns in the North, 1648* (Frontline Books, 2012), pp. xxxviii + 216, ISBN 9781848326545, £25.

Reviewed by Prof Peter Gaunt

These four books, all of them exploring a specific county or a fairly distinct region, attest to the continuing vibrancy of local or regional studies of the English civil war – clearly a misnomer, as Wales was fully involved and engaged in that conflict – both during the main war of 1642-46 and in the renewed conflict of 1648, which serves as the focus of two of these volumes.

In many ways the most straightforward of the four is David Ross's fine study of the civil war in Herefordshire, a county which, as the title indicates, was predominantly royalist in sympathy and control but which contained pro-parliamentarian elements, most notably the Harley family of Brampton Bryan in the far north of the county. It also saw significant fighting at various stages of the main war, for the county town changed hands several times during the first year of the fighting, twice captured but twice abandoned by the parliamentarians; and while Herefordshire was, from the latter half of 1643, almost entirely under royalist control, from time to time during 1644 it was raided by the Gloucester parliamentarians and it was slowly captured and secured by English and Scottish parliamentary forces during 1645-46. Having crisply and convincingly sketched out the physical, topographical, socio-economic, religious, political and administrative elements of Herefordshire on the eve of conflict, the author focuses on the principal war of 1642-46, exploring first how the county slowly and

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unevenly divided during 1642, with Robert Harley and his allies increasingly eclipsed by those who supported the king, and how Herefordshire moved uneasily from peace to war. He then provides a mainly chronological account of the military campaigns and war-time developments within or involving the county.

The story told of Herefordshire's war 1642-46 is rich and detailed, with plenty of quotations from contemporary primary sources. As well as providing a narrative of events, it analyses and highlights key aspects of Herefordshire's civil war: how, as in most counties, the fighting was not determined by events within the county alone but was shaped by what was going on in neighbouring counties and in the wider region; the fear and turmoil which occurred when a town fell or changed hands, as Hereford did several times, so that while in reality little blood was spilled, there was lots of distress and apprehension as the civil war pendulum swung, with opponents at one stage being interrogated by newly-dominant officials as a noose was very visibly erected and dangled outside the window, and with a former mayor suffering some sort of mental breakdown, smearing his face with his own excrement; how, despite civilities and restraint being generally maintained in the course of the conflict, there were occasional acts of extreme violence, including the casual but deliberate killings of unarmed civilians, of a blind man and of an aged vicar, as well as the slaughter of the parliamentary garrison of Hopton Castle, just over the border in Shropshire, when it fell to the king's forces in spring 1644, and the capture of, but quarter given to, the defenders of Brampton Bryan Castle when it eventually surrendered to the royalists after long and bitter sieges a few weeks later, plus the heavy loss of life amongst the royalist garrison when parliament's Scottish allies stormed Canon Frome in summer 1645; how during spring 1645 some local men, dubbed 'clubmen', felt aggrieved with the onerous war-time demands being made by the royalist governor of Hereford, armed themselves and tried to attack Hereford, only to be easily and firmly rebuffed by the king's troops; and how, having successfully endured and survived a siege by the Scots during summer 1645, the county town and its royalist garrison fell to parliament by subterfuge in a surprise attack at dawn on a bleak and snowy mid-winter's day shortly before Christmas 1645.

The closing chapters continue Herefordshire's story from the fall of the county town down to 1649 and a little beyond. They explore how the county was mopped up by parliamentarians during 1646 and how a parliamentary county administration under John Birch – newly dominant within Herefordshire and to some extent working alongside but also clashing with Robert Harley and the far more established Harley interest – was set up in the course of the year; they examine the military unrest and divisions amongst parliamentary officials and troops during 1647 and the limited and failed attempt of a local old royalist, Sir Henry Lingen, to lead a rising for the king in 1648; and they assess both the subsequent punishment and fates of war-time royalists and the eclipse of Robert Harley and the Harleys.

Overall, this is an excellent, balanced and thoughtful account. It rests and draws upon an impressive array of contemporary sources, both printed and archival, as well as on more recent and modern published works. The clearly written and very accessible text is enhanced by a generous selection of illustrations, including portraits and engravings of many of the protagonists, reproductions of a range of documents and modern photographs of buildings and locations which were caught up in the war. Although not perhaps a comprehensive account of, or the last word on, the civil war in Herefordshire, this is an excellent and exemplary study of the civil war in a hitherto somewhat neglected county. The author and his publishers are to be warmly congratulated for producing such an enjoyable, enlightening, attractive and modestly priced book.

J.M. Gratton's study of the civil war in Lancashire, springing from his doctoral thesis, takes a different approach. Again, it deals with a county which entered the war rather uncertainly and which was initially divided between king and parliament, though here the position was clarified much earlier. The military defeat of Lancashire's leading royalist, the Earl of Derby, in spring 1643, led to the collapse of royalism within the county. Despite the persistence and long survival of the royalist garrison at Lathom House, the brief and bloody campaign of Prince Rupert in southern Lancashire in spring 1644, which led to the temporary capture of Bolton, Liverpool and a few other minor bases, and the presence of Scottish-royalist armies which were crushed in and around Preston in summer 1648 and which marched through en route to destruction further south in summer

1651, from spring 1643 onwards Lancashire was fairly firmly in the hands of parliamentary troops and administered by parliamentary politicians, officials and gentlemen. It is this county administration and the means by which the war effort was established, supplied and maintained in Lancashire which provide the focus of this study rather than the war itself, and while a brief chronological table included amongst the preliminaries provides a reader new to the civil war in Lancashire with a chronological outline of military developments, those seeking a military narrative and an account of the various battles, skirmishes, sieges and wider campaigns of the civil war in Lancashire might look elsewhere – perhaps to Stephen Bull’s excellent *‘A General Plague of Madness’: The Civil Wars in Lancashire, 1640-1660* (Lancaster, 2009).

In two substantial chapters which comprise the first two-thirds or so of Gratton’s main text, he explores firstly administration and finance in wartime Lancashire from 1642 to 1651, covering administrative structures and personnel, powers, roles and work, sources of income and financial receipts and expenditure; and secondly the politics of Lancashire’s administration and administrators over the same period, looking at divisions and factions and the issues which gave rise to them, successive changes in personnel and changing relations between the county and central government. Both chapters are divided into sections examining in turn the parliamentary and then the royalist sides of these issues, but they are of very unequal length and depth. While in Lancashire and elsewhere, parliamentary county administrations have left a wealth of mainly financial records and source material, which historians can use to reconstruct fairly full pictures of the work of parliament’s county committees, surviving royalist source material of this sort is usually desperately thin, either because the royalists were from the outset less bureaucratic during the war or because as the royalist cause went under, their papers were deliberately or accidentally scattered and destroyed. In Lancashire’s case, this pattern is compounded and exacerbated by the brevity and incomplete nature of the royalist county administration – the king’s men were in a position to try to run the county only during the opening nine months or so of the war and even at that stage they had little or no control over significant parts of the county. But working within these quite severe limitations, Gratton does all he can to squeeze the meagre surviving source material in order to reconstruct a picture of the royalist administration and to compare it to the far better sourced and fuller images

of the parliamentary war effort in Lancashire. The remaining two principal chapters, both rather briefer and also slightly more amorphous, are not so clearly divided into royalist and parliamentary sub-sections, though in both of them the information about the parliamentary war effort is again fuller and more detailed than that surviving for the briefer and far less successful royalist war effort. The first explores military organisation, including issues such as recruitment and allegiance, the geographical origins and distribution of Lancashire's royalist and parliamentary officers, the numbers of troops raised and the various regiments which both sides established early in the war and reorganised in the course of it; the second, entitled 'The armies in action', has a looser feel and explores a range of military-related issues, such as the quality of the military leaders, attempts by both sides to include Lancashire within wider regional groupings or associations of counties, Lancashire's garrisons, artillery and magazines and the role in the war played by the sea and by shipping, a potentially important factor in a county with such a long coastline and several ports.

All this detailed discussion and very thorough analysis, drawing upon a mass of source material, leads on to and informs a number of key findings, brought together in a clear and crisp concluding chapter. The author stresses the Earl of Derby's limitations and failings as a royalist military leader, distrusted by the king and the royalist high command in Oxford, because of his moderation and personal record unable to arouse much popular support in Lancashire and hamstrung by the habit of active royalists there to head off and to fight for the king elsewhere; although sometimes tainted by allegations that many in his army were Catholics, in reality the Lancashire Catholics did not give much support to Derby and often also departed the county to take up arms for the king in Yorkshire or further south, in what Gratton interestingly dubs a succession of 'exodus'. Thus he concludes that royalist weaknesses, rather than parliamentary strengths, enabled the latter to take control of almost the whole county surprisingly easily in spring and early summer 1643. Then and thereafter the parliamentary war effort was facilitated and strengthened by an effective county administration, which empowered and drew on a broader social spectrum than the royalists, including lesser gentry, merchants and yeomen. It was more cohesive but also more flexible and better at working with the local population and at taking on board local concerns than the more hierarchical and 'semi-feudal' approach taken by Derby and from afar by the

king. The already superior parliamentary county administration was revamped in summer 1645, as overall victory in the war approached, to make it more efficient, more civilian in appearance and less burdensome. On the more military aspects of the war effort, assessed in the third and fourth chapters, the author again concludes that parliamentary flexibility and adaptability gave it the military edge over the more rigid royalist approach. On the other hand, Gratton also finds that the parliamentary county administration became increasingly divided and beset by problems in the years after the main civil war, leading to a crisis and further restructuring in 1648-49 and the emergence towards the end of the period examined here of a revamped, more radical and less socially elevated parliamentary administration in Lancashire.

Gratton's thoughtful and, in the main, convincing conclusions also draw upon the findings of his major and meticulous work on the royalist and parliamentary officers who came from Lancashire. Some of this work is found within the texts of the main chapters and various tables and maps included there, but much of it is contained within the substantial and very informative appendices which follow. They include lists of the county's parliamentary and royalist regiments and their officers and a twenty-page 'data summary' of 771 Lancashire royalist and parliamentary officers – a hugely valuable compendium of, and quarry for, information and clearly the fruit of a great deal of work. It reveals, for example, the very substantial contribution of Lancashire officers, parliamentary as well as royalist, to the war outside the county and the importance of Lancashire Catholics on the royalist side, even if many of them promptly departed to campaign outside the county, as well as suggesting that support for both sides was geographically more diverse within Lancashire than has often been argued or assumed. This is a fine and detailed study, of necessity in parts rather heavy on names, numbers and statistics but in the main very readable, which makes major contributions to our understanding of both the civil war in Lancashire and the royalist and parliamentary war efforts and war-time administrations.

While both Ross and Gratton include the renewed fighting of 1648 and the so-called second civil war in their chronologically much broader assessments, the remaining two volumes focus specifically on that conflict. The home-grown English and Welsh risings are generally seen as grounded

in a mixture of old royalism and more recent anti-parliamentarianism, the latter springing from parliament's failure to achieve a settlement with the king in the wake of its victory in the main war and its continuation of war-time conditions and innovations. The two elements were present and influential to very different degrees in different areas, historians suggest. Thus while the Kentish and Essex risings are often portrayed as predominantly royalist in nature almost from the outset, the rising which began and ended in Pembrokeshire during the first half of 1648, but which for a time spread more generally across parts of South Wales, is often seen as rooted in anti-parliamentarianism. Robert Matthews's new and valuable reassessment of the rising strongly confirms this, arguing vigorously that it began as, and for several weeks remained, a protest movement by a small group of hitherto loyal parliamentary officers, who felt badly treated by and increasingly alienated from parliament, as well as from the army high command.

After an opening chapter which explores national developments and the fracturing of the parliamentary cause in 1646-48, thus providing the context for what he terms the Pembrokeshire 'mutiny', Matthews explores in detail the causes of the rising, principally the grievances felt by a handful of parliamentary officers and how these led them, during the opening weeks of 1648, to make a stand. John Poyer, a Pembrokeshire man of fairly humble origins, is shown to have been a loyal parliamentarian throughout the main war of 1642-46 and for much of it governor of Pembroke castle and its garrison, but Matthews shows that his constant support for parliament, combined with his lowly socio-economic origins and allegedly rather tactless and arrogant manner, meant that in the course of the main war and beyond he had made enemies amongst the Pembrokeshire gentry. Many members of the traditional county elite had flowed with the tide during Pembrokeshire's very complex and fluctuating civil war, often throwing in their lot with the royalists while they were in the ascendant. Restored to the parliamentary fold and to power after the war, they resented and disliked Poyer, alleging that he was guilty of financial corruption and of moral and sexual laxity. Poyer, for his part, had for some time been proclaiming that he was seriously out of pocket in supporting the parliamentary war effort in Pembrokeshire and had been seeking compensation and reward from parliament. During much of the main war and beyond he had worked closely with Rowland Laugharne, another local

man studied afresh here, unlike Poyer a member of the local landowning elite, who had also consistently supported parliament during the war and had been parliament's regional commander in the whole of south-west Wales for most of the war years and beyond. His war-time actions had also earned him the enmity of other members of the sometimes pro-royalist county elite, it is argued. When, during winter 1647-48, as part of the drive to disband parliamentary troops and to slim down the military arm, Poyer was earmarked to lose his garrison, which was to be disbanded, as well as his control of Pembroke Castle, which was to be handed over to another officer, while Laugharne was also to have his men disbanded, the two of them resisted and increasingly made common cause. They clearly distrusted the local committee, full of their enemies amongst the Pembrokeshire elite, which had been appointed to raise money to fund the proposed disbandment and to oversee its disbursement to those leaving the army, and feared that if they lost their military commands, their forces and their power-bases, they would be left as powerless to resist their enemies within the county as they would be to recover what was owed to them in arrears and other expenses.

Matthews shows how these issues festered and worsened during February and March 1648, as Poyer and Laugharne, in due course joined by other officers, especially Colonel Rice Powell, and supported by many of their troops, actively and physically resisted attempts by parliament and by Fairfax and other senior officers to enforce their compliance, removal and disbandment. At the same time, they also repeatedly proclaimed that they were loyal parliamentarians and certainly not rebels or traitors and offered to stand down themselves and to disband their men if certain conditions were met, including payment in full of arrears and generous financial compensation for their own losses during the war. But neither parliament nor the army high command was willing to countenance these terms and their attempts to apply further pressure on the obdurate and increasingly mutinous Pembrokeshire officers pushed them, in turn, into taking more extreme actions, digging in and reinforcing themselves in Pembroke and Tenby, resisting and firing on parliamentary troops sent against them, killing and wounding some of them. However, Matthews argues very strongly that for a long time there was little sign that Poyer, Laugharne, Powell and the others were acting on behalf of the king or supporting his cause in resisting disbandment, the orders of parliament and the

parliamentarian Lord General. Only during spring 1648, with news that significant numbers of New Model troops were being sent against them, did they broaden their programme, criticising the failure of parliament to reach a settlement with the king, highlighting the continuing threat to laws and liberty and to the true religion, as well as the persistence of high taxes and sequestration, and, perhaps above all, stating that one of their goals was to enable the king to enter into a personal treaty with parliament in freedom, honour and safety, thus expressing qualified support for the royalist cause – something reiterated and reinforced in a letter they sent to the Prince of Wales. In the face of parliament's overwhelming military force, the protagonists had been forced to attempt to broaden their appeal, Matthews suggests, reorientating a hitherto parliamentarian-led rising in order to win a wider following, including, through its new pro-royalist statements and tone, support from the South Wales royalists. The author explores how this brought some success during the spring, winning wider support in Pembrokeshire and further afield in Carmarthenshire, Glamorganshire and other parts of South Wales, though by no means all royalists in the region were won over and came out for them.

This analysis of the origins, nature and changing tone and vocabulary of the Pembrokeshire and South Wales rising is strong, generally convincing and is probably the most interesting and valuable part of this fine study. In the second half of the book the author proceeds, in a mainly chronological fashion, to chart the course and the fall of the armed rebellion which followed, exploring the rebels' defeat in battle at St Fagans near Cardiff in early May, the arrival in South Wales of Cromwell at the head of a substantial part of the New Model and the campaign which he and other officers mounted in the region, retaking the towns and castles of Chepstow and Tenby and eventually, after a long and difficult siege, forcing the surrender of the town and castle of Pembroke; Cromwell's lengthy and not unblemished siege operation, which often receives disappointingly brief attention in accounts of the war and of Cromwell's military career, is here examined in fair detail. The closing chapters explore the fate of the rebels, concluding that large numbers of ordinary troops were sent abroad to work in Barbados or to fight for Venice against the Turks; explore the trials and condemnations of the three leaders and the execution of Poyer; assess the new government and administration of South Wales which parliament put in place in the aftermath of the rebellion; and examine the shortcomings and

limitations of the rising both in isolation and as part of the wider second civil war of 1648. Overall, this is an important and impressive study of the Pembrokeshire and South Wales rising, well written and engaging, strongly and convincingly argued and throwing important light on its nature and origins. While the footnotes suggest little use of, or reliance upon, archival sources here – how far surviving material held in county records offices and national repositories might extend and strengthen our understanding of the rising is not clear – the author has, however, certainly made strong, thorough and meticulous use of printed primary sources, especially the newspapers and pamphlets of the day, to construct this impressive and detailed study of the Pembrokeshire and South Wales rising.

The fourth book also examines an aspect of the second civil war and of the fighting of 1648, but this time the focus is upon parliament's campaigns in northern England against a mixture of local English royalists and the Scottish-royalist army which proceeded at a snail's pace southwards through the north-western counties during the summer. Peter Hill and Jane Wilkinson put in place the context of these campaigns, exploring the background to, and the unfolding of, the second civil war, both nationally and regionally, the latter including the capture by royalists of the key border towns of Carlisle and Berwick in April 1648 and the raising and entry into England of the Scottish-royalist army, which crossed the border on 8 July. The arrival in the region, later in the summer, of Cromwell and his New Model troops, marching northwards once they had secured Pembroke, the major and successful series of engagements in which Cromwell and his army defeated the Scots in and around Preston on 17 August and between Preston and Warrington over the following two days, and Cromwell's entry into, and activities within, Scotland in the early autumn are all explored here in the course of the narrative, but they are covered only briefly. For this is not a study of the second civil war in northern England (and related Scottish developments) in general, but very much a new assessment of the key role played by Major-General John Lambert in these events and his campaigns during 1648-49. Lambert had overall command of the campaign to hinder, harass and delay the English and Scottish royalists in spring and early summer 1648, before the arrival of Cromwell and his New Model reinforcements; and then, having accompanied Cromwell into Scotland and been based there for several weeks, he had command of much of the subsequent mopping-up operations in northern England, down to the

surrender to him of the last royalist outpost, Pontefract castle, in March 1649.

The co-authors introduce Lambert and provide a biographical sketch of this dynamic and charismatic Yorkshireman and they also explore how he put together a sizeable army in spring and summer 1648, giving close attention to, and providing lots of details about, the numbers of men he commanded at various stages. Thereafter, they closely follow his northern campaigns during 1648-49, which took him backwards and forwards across the Pennines and which saw him active in all the northern counties, from north Lincolnshire northwards. In the main, therefore, this book comprises a detailed military narrative and analysis of Lambert's movements and actions during the twelve months or so between spring 1648 and spring 1649, taking in an array of sieges and skirmishes, some of them already quite well known and well-studied, but many hitherto largely neglected in military histories of the war. Supported by maps and plans, together with a generous selection of modern photographs of various urban and rural sites, locations and structures – which themselves bring out how important river crossings and bridges were to Lambert's campaigns and to the fighting in the north, especially as 1648 was a very wet year, with streams and rivers running very high and normal fording places rendered impassable – the co-authors reassess actions around Maiden Castle and the Stainmore pass, Warwick Bridge, Ferrybridge and Bowes, as well as the more familiar events which unfolded in and around Appleby, Scarborough and Pontefract. Drawing upon a wide range of contemporary sources, including some archival material, but more extensively upon printed primary sources and again making very good use of the newspapers and pamphlets of the day, the co-authors thus flesh out Lambert's campaigns and provide new evidence and fresh interpretations for some of his northern actions.

The main text ends rather abruptly and it is a shame that the co-authors did not include a final concluding chapter, pulling everything together and driving home what this re-examination of Lambert's campaigns of 1648-49 reveals about his role in the second civil war and his abilities as a military leader and commander. Instead, the volume closes with a series of informative appendices. These examine and assess the value of key printed sources, list and provide information about 18 northern castles involved in the campaigns of 1648-49, give potted biographies of other protagonists and

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senior officers and, most valuably, provide a new and reportedly more accurate transcript of the diary or account of his military service written by the parliamentarian officer John Birch, covering his period of active campaigning from mid-May to mid-October 1648, continuing far more intermittently thereafter down to March 1650. Like the co-authors' earlier volume reproducing the diary of Major John Sanderson, this is presented in tabular form, with the text broken down into small sections, accompanied in other columns by the date, the locations where Birch was travelling from and to if he was on the move that day, the distance he covered and other relevant and clarifying information. During the five months or so of his active campaigning during 1648, the co-authors show that Birch travelled 573 miles in total, at an average of over eleven miles per day. The use and analysis of Birch's military account is typical of the volume as a whole, paying meticulous and detailed attention to military actions and events often passed over briefly or entirely overlooked in broader military accounts and placing them within their local and regional context. Springing from their earlier and continuing work on the war in northern England, the co-authors clearly have a very strong feel for the area, for the landscape and the conditions on the ground which shaped Lambert's campaigns, giving an added and interesting dimension to this thorough and informative military account.

Bernard Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649-1660* (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. xiii + 227, ISBN 019964178, £60.

Reviewed by Prof Ivan Roots

The outcome of the paper and shooting wars of the 1640s was regicide, abolition of monarchy and of an established episcopal church. Revolution enough. But 1649 seemed too, to offer to some of the incitors at least opportunity, alongside political and constitutional experiment, to transform the traditional national way of life and manners, lay and clerical – the culture, in fact. A thorough-going reformation indeed, directed primarily by that energetic and amorphous lot, the puritans. Though it might seem that monarchy ran inextricably through that culture, surviving organised royalism was not really conspicuous in resistance to the reformers' campaign, 'The people' did not rise for Charles Stuart in 1651 nor in 1660 when restoration

was set in motion by military/naval coups. Bernard Capp, in this appealing survey of 'the cultural wars' does not even mention Penruddock's Rising.

Here we have a first effective attempt to evaluate the puritan effort in all its diversity, looking at it both from above and below, drawing copiously on national and (very productively) local records, supporting a wealth of less formal sources, many unfamiliar, surprising even, made indispensable by the force of Capp's questioning. A large section of this convincing study identifies what the puritans were up against, or at any rate considered they were. The consequent list of potential sins against God, many, like swearing and Sabbath-breaking long-standing, becomes almost hilarious with the inclusion of such 'worldly pleasures' as wigs (then just becoming available) and 'a drink called coffee'. Sexual activity of almost any kind was suspect. The austere John Owen was appalled by 'the disorderliness' of Cromwell's household. In an uphill task, Capp distinguishes between the possible and the unobtainable in matters of behaviour within a patchwork of chartered boroughs and disparate rural parishes. What was actually achieved is considered in a final section where Capp explores some specific contexts. Kidderminster can stand as something of a model of reformation thanks largely to the efforts of tireless and (helpfully) scribacious Richard Baxter. Chester and Southampton were conspicuous failures. 'Moderate' success can be observed in Scarborough and York. More substantial was Gloucester where magistrates and ministers showed a remarkable degree of tolerance of each other. In Maidstone (where, in the 1930s, I first encountered the Interregnum) the Sabbath was 'never so strictly observed', unprofaned by cricket or by that perennial epitome of popular disorder, football. Capp concludes this far-reaching survey with a solid chapter on Exeter (where I am spending my closing years still fascinated, still puzzled by those headlong times). The demonstration that Godly Rule can be traced through a long decade in this 'ever-faithful' cathedral city might, I imagine, come as a surprise to more than a few of my fellow citizens.

So Capp's assessment of the attempt at reformation shows that more was achieved than has been generally accepted. The old order would come back of course, in 1660. But restorations are invariably imperfect. You cannot get away from the fact that, though the Church of England was re-Established, nonconformity, as Capp himself has argued in Jane Mills' *Cromwell's Legacy*, was there to stay.

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WRITING AND SOURCES XV: NEW LIGHT ON WHAT
CROMWELL SAID TO THE OFFICERS ON 27 FEBRUARY 1657

By Prof Peter Gaunt

In the wake of the introduction into the second Protectorate parliament of a Remonstrance designed to supersede the existing written constitution and to alter the governmental structure in several ways, most notably by restoring kingship and by giving the Lord Protector the title and powers of king, as well as by re-establishing a second unelected parliamentary chamber, on 27 February 1657 Cromwell had an angry confrontation with a group of senior army officers. On the 26th many of the senior officers then in London, including the Major-Generals, gathered both to discuss the Remonstrance and to coordinate their opposition to the kingship proposal. On 27 February around one hundred officers met the Protector after a pre-arranged sermon and, with Colonel Mills acting as their spokesman, they outlined their dissatisfaction with the Remonstrance and their hope that Cromwell would reject the title of king – ‘that his Highness would not hearken to the title (King) because it was not pleasing to his army, and was matter of scandal to the people of God, of great rejoicing to the enemy; that it was hazardous to his own person, and of great danger to the three nations; such an assumption making way for Charles Stewart to come in again’, as the fullest surviving summary of the officers’ address puts it.¹ The Protector’s response was blunt and forceful, ‘a rounder awnswer then I believe they expected’, as one of Henry Cromwell’s correspondents noted in his report.² Two fairly detailed summaries of Cromwell’s speech had been identified by the early twentieth century and have long been known to and drawn upon by historians. Nonetheless, they need to be reproduced here in full and assessed afresh, before turning to examine a new or hitherto overlooked and rather different account of this speech.

The first detailed summary was contained in a letter written on 3 March and sent to Henry Cromwell in Ireland by one of his regular London-based correspondents, Anthony Morgan (and hence is hereafter referred to as the ‘Morgan’ version):

His Highness told them that what they now so much startled at was a thing to which they were formerly reconciled so farr that when they made him dissolve the Long Parliament (for twas done against his judgment) they would have made him king. When he had refused that, they would have had him choose 10 persons to assist

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him in the government, but because he might be suspected to have too much influence upon them he proposed 140, and those were nominated by themselves; not an officer of the degree of a captain but named more then he himselfe did. Those 140 honest men could not governe; the ministry and propriety were like to be destroyed. Then 7 of them made an instrument of government, brought it to him with the name of king in it, and there was not much counsell or consideration had in the making it, and accordingly it proved an imperfect thing which will neither preserve our religious or civill rights. His opinion was last parliament that it must be mended, but the parliament must not touch it; they must be sent home with no good report of the government; it was against his mind. Then you would be mending it yourselfs, when you know I am sworne not to suffer it to be altered but by parliament, and then you might have given me a kick on the breech and turne me going. Then you would have this parliament called; it was against my judgment, but I could have no quietness till [it] was done; when they were chosen you garbled them, kept out and put in whom you pleased by the instrument, and I am sworne to make good all you doe, right or wrong, and because 120 are excluded I must thinke them malignants or scandalous whether they are so or not. Yet now you complain of those [that] are admitted. I have no designe upon them or you. I never courted you nor never will. I have a sure refuge; if they doe good things I must and will stand by them. They are honest men and have done good things; I know not what you can blame them for unless because they love me too well. You are offended at a house of lords. I tell you that unless you have some such thing as a balance you can not be safe, but either you will grow upon the civill liberties by secluding such as are elected to sitt in parliament (next time for ought I know you may exclud 400); or they will grow upon your liberty in religion. I abhor James Nailers principle, yet interposed. You see what my lettre signified. This instrument of government will not doe your work. Choose 6 or 7 out of your number to come and speake with me and [I] will give them further satisfaction, and so good night.³

The second detailed summary was contained in an apparently contemporary letter, written on 7 March, but one which now survives and is known only

as a later unsigned and perhaps incomplete copy within a volume containing the texts of several of Cromwell's speeches of the Protectorate (and hence is hereafter referred to as the 'anonymous' version):

That the first man that told him of it was he, the mouth of the officers then present, (meaning Colonel Mills); that, for his part, he had never been at any cabal about the same, (hinting by that the frequent cabals that were against Kingship by certain officers). He said the time was when they boggled not at the word (King), for the Instrument by which the government now stands was presented to his Highness with the title (King) in it, as some there present could witness, (pointing at a principal officer then in his eye), and he refused to accept of the title. But how it comes to pass that they now startle at [that] title, they best knew. That, for his part, he loved not the title, a feather in a hat, as little as they did. That they had made him their drudge upon all occasions; to dissolve the Long Parliament, who had contracted evil enough by long sitting; to call a Parliament or Convention of their naming, who met; and what did they? fly at liberty and property, insomuch as if one man had twelve cows, they held another that wanted cows ought to take a share with his neighbour. Who could have said any thing was their own, if they had gone on? After their dissolution, how was I pressed by you (said he) for the rooting out of the ministry; nay, rather than fail, to starve them out. A Parliament was afterwards called; they sat five months; it's true we hardly heard of them in all that time. They took the Instrument into debate, and they must needs be dissolved; and yet stood not the Instrument in need of mending? Was not the case hard with me, to be put upon to swear to that which was so hard to be kept? Some time after that, you thought it was necessary to have Major-Generals; and the first rise to that motion then was the late general insurrections and was justifiable; and your Major-Generals did your parts well. You might have gone on. Who bid you go to the House with a Bill, and there receive a foil? After you had exercised this power a while, impatient were you till a Parliament was called. I gave my vote against it; but you [were] confident, by your own strength and interest, to get men chosen to your hearts and desires. How you have failed therein and how much the the⁴ country hath been disoblged, is well known. That it is time to come

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to a settlement, and lay aside arbitrary proceedings, so unacceptable to the nation. And by the proceedings of this Parliament, you see they stand in need of a check or balancing power, (meaning the House of Lords, or a House so constituted) for the case of James Naylor might happen to be your own case. By their judicial power they fall upon life and member, and doth the Instrument in being enable me to control it?⁵

It should be noted that neither writer claimed to be reproducing the full speech or to be directly quoting Cromwell's own words. Indeed, the anonymous author went on to admit that he had summarised 'some of the heads insisted on in his speech', and so implicitly not all of them, and that while he had given 'the full sense' of what Cromwell had said under those heads, he had 'perhaps not' used 'the same words'.⁶ Nonetheless, historians of Cromwell and his Protectorate generally give credence to these two detailed and apparently (semi-) independent summaries, reassured on a number of grounds. Firstly, these two sources are consistent in portraying the overall composition and thrust of the speech, being in the main a narrative of key constitutional and governmental developments and issues of 1653-57 in which the blame for inconsistencies, failures and missed opportunities was repeatedly heaped upon the shoulders of the army officers and in which the faults of the Instrument of Government, the Protectoral constitution drawn up in December 1653 by a group of army officers, were repeatedly highlighted. Secondly, in terms of their content, although (as we shall shortly see) there were some differences and variations between them, on the whole the two are quite consistent in their summaries of what Cromwell said, the points he made and the order in which he made them. Thirdly, between them they appear to include some typically Cromwellian turns of phrase, most notably the reference to the kingly title as a mere 'feather in a hat'; such phrases as 'you might have given me a kick on the breech and turn me going', 'I never courted you nor never will' and 'insomuch as if one man had twelve cows, they held another that wanted cows ought to take share with his neighbour' also seem quite distinctive or stand out as having an authentic Cromwellian ring to them, suggesting that in places both authors were directly quoting Cromwell's own words.

Fourthly, we know from several other briefer contemporary accounts that something of this sort occurred and was said on 27 February. Thus in a

letter of 3 March William Jephson told Henry Cromwell that the officers had made their address to Cromwell and had received a 'rounder' response than they had expected; in a letter of 3 March John Thurloe informed Henry Cromwell that 'the other day' the officers came to the Protector 'and represented to hym their trouble, that somethinge was doeing in parliament to the destruction of the present governement' but that Cromwell then 'spake to them in very plaine yet loveinge and kinde expressions', apparently to their satisfaction, while two days later when he wrote to George Monck in Scotland Thurloe similarly reported that 'I suppose you have heard that the officers have had their meetings and some of them were not without their dissatisfactions, but his Highnes haveing spoken to them at large the other night', this had created greater satisfaction or at least acquiescence amongst them.⁷ The fullest of these briefer accounts, written by Gilbert Mabbott, a regular author of London newsletters, and given in his newsletter of 28 February, provides further support and corroboration:

His Highnesse made a large speech to many officers of the army then present; wherein hee tooke notice that hee knew nothing of the Bill for King-shippe till the day before that Colonel Mills acquainted him therewith, that hee might have bin King longe since if hee had delighted to weare a feather in his hatt, that those vaine titles hee was never taken with, yet thought itt convenient that a check should bee putt upon the unlimited power of this Parliament (which hee never was free to call, nor willing to agree to the Instrument of Governement made by 8 of the Major Generalls), for that by the same law and reason they punished Naylor they might punish an Independent, or Anabaptist, whereby the interest of the godly people of the 3 nations could nott bee secure as the Governement is now establish't, the Instrument for which hee hath long desired might bee altered, desiring that any 10 of them with some other freinds would meete with him, and debate things for their satisfaction.⁸

The Morgan and anonymous versions, in some places supported by Mabbott's briefer and more cramped version, which also has a much less secure narrative thread to it and in places seems a little garbled, may together enable us to reconstruct the speech. It apparently opened with Cromwell denying prior knowledge of the kingship proposal until informed

of it by Colonel Mills himself (anonymous and Mabbott), perhaps only on the previous day (Mabbott) – this part of Mabbott’s text is rather ambiguous, but if Cromwell was claiming not to have known of the Remonstrance’s kingship proposal until 26 February, this strains credibility. Cromwell then stressed that he had hitherto had opportunities to take the crown (found in all three versions), for the officers themselves had included the title in some of their constitutional proposals of 1653, specifically both in spring in the wake of the ejection of the Rump of the Long Parliament (Morgan) and again towards the end of the year as the Nominated Assembly collapsed and when he was offered the first version of the Instrument of Government (anonymous and in Morgan, too, though placed rather later in that version). Cromwell drew attention to how he had rejected the officers’ offer(s) of the crown in 1653, stressing that he cared little for such titles and dismissing that of king as a mere feather in a hat or in his hat (anonymous and Mabbott).

It was apparently at this point that Cromwell launched into his chronological review of key political and constitutional developments of the past four years, providing a selective narrative of the period 1653-57 designed to cast the army officers themselves in a bad light, as well as to demonstrate the shortcomings of the Instrument of Government and thus to justify constitutional revision. Cromwell claimed that the officers had forced him to dissolve the Rump (Morgan and anonymous) against his judgment (Morgan) and, once he had rejected both their offer of the crown and their suggestion that he govern with a small ten-man council (Morgan), the officers established the Nominated Assembly, selecting most of the 140 members themselves (Morgan and anonymous). After a while, that Assembly proved unable to govern and to be a threat to ministry and property (Morgan) or to liberty and property (anonymous) – the slight but significant difference in wording raises the possibility that the variation was the result of an error and that ‘ministry’ in one version was a mishearing of, a slip of the pen or a mistaken reading/transcription of ‘liberty’ or vice versa. The anonymous version alone suggests that Cromwell then claimed that the officers had pressed him to ‘root out’ or even to starve out the ministry, perhaps an assertion that the officers, like the radicals in the Nominated Assembly, had wanted to see the end of an established, state-funded ministry and the tithing system. With the Assembly gone, some senior officers – either seven of them (Morgan) or eight of the Major-Generals

(Mabbott) – had drawn up the Instrument of Government, presenting it to Cromwell initially with the title of king in it (Morgan and anonymous, though found in different parts of the summaries). Even with that title dropped, the Instrument as accepted and implemented had proved defective, Cromwell suggested (Morgan and anonymous). He may have linked this point to the record of the first Protectorate parliament, which attempted to revise the Instrument and which had duly been dissolved, as Cromwell stated or strongly implied that certainly by 1657, and possibly at the time, he regretted this, for he was acutely aware that the Instrument was imperfect and in need of revision (Morgan and anonymous). Cromwell's expression of dissatisfaction with the Instrument comes rather later in Mabbott's more cramped summary.

At that point, in dealing with developments of the eighteen months or so between the dissolution of the first and the decision to call the second Protectorate parliaments, the two main accounts have Cromwell making different points. One (Morgan) suggests that Cromwell alleged that the army officers themselves pressed or attempted to alter the written constitution during 1655-56, even though as Protector he was required to safeguard the constitution and to allow only parliamentary reform; there is nothing clear or explicit along these lines in the anonymous version. Instead, at this point the anonymous version has Cromwell focussing on the system of the Major-Generals, suggesting that the initiative to set it up came from the officers themselves, though he felt that it was justifiable and that the Major-Generals performed well, and instead Cromwell reportedly criticised their misjudgement in unnecessarily seeking parliamentary endorsement of the system via the Militia or Decimation Bill, only to be rebuffed and to have the Bill rejected; nothing about the establishment, performance and collapse of the system of the Major-Generals appears in the Morgan version.

The two main accounts, and to some extent Mabbott too, come back together in their record of what Cromwell had to say about the summoning of the second Protectorate parliament and its subsequent performance. It was called at the insistence of the army officers and against Cromwell's judgment (Morgan and anonymous), in part because the officers wrongly thought that they could control the elections and ensure the return of supportive MPs (anonymous). As a consequence of this miscalculation, the officers had gone on to vet and to exclude from the parliament around 120

MPs, with Cromwell expressing misgivings about this, acquiescing in it only reluctantly and fearful of even more drastic military purges of future parliaments should a single chamber parliament and the army take different and hostile lines in some sort of power struggle (Morgan). Cromwell went on to defend the current MPs and their record during the session then in progress (again, Morgan alone). However, in his last main political point, Cromwell noted the way in which the House of Commons sitting alone had reacted (too) strongly to the wayward Quaker James Naylor and had severely punished him for his religious actions, unrestrained by a second chamber or by the Protector's own attempt to intervene via a letter, underlining one of the key shortcomings of the Instrument and so demonstrating the need to create a second and restraining or balancing parliamentary chamber; while distancing himself from Naylor's actions, Cromwell stressed that under the existing constitution parliament might unduly and dangerously restrict religious liberties (all this found in all three versions, though with slight variations in emphasis), such that various groups might find themselves under threat – members of the army (Morgan and anonymous), Independents or Presbyterians (Mabbott). For Cromwell, this seemed to be the clinching argument in demonstrating that the existing constitution was in need of change. Cromwell then closed by inviting the army officers to choose a small group of representatives from amongst themselves to come and speak with him further on the issue (Morgan and Mabbott).

However, another surviving account of this speech, while corresponding with and so further confirming significant elements of the Morgan and anonymous versions (as well as in places the briefer Mabbott account) contains material not found in any of these. Thus, if it is accurate and reliable, it not only extends our knowledge and understanding of Cromwell's speech but also suggests that on 27 February he ranged rather more widely than the better-known summaries indicate. It was amongst the vast quantity of original and historical material acquired in the later nineteenth century by the antiquary, historian and avid collector John Parsons Earwaker (1847-95). During his short life, Earwaker amassed a huge collection of books, original manuscripts, transcripts and other items, much of it relating to his native Cheshire and to neighbouring Lancashire.⁹ As well as over one hundred published books or printed items relevant to Cheshire, a further thousand or more manuscript volumes, loose papers, bundles, rolls, plans and drawings

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relating to the history of the county, acquired and once owned by Earwaker, have ended up in the Cheshire County Record Office. Some of Earwaker's manuscripts were grouped by subject, such as 'churches', 'civil war', 'heraldry', 'Cheshire clergy' and so on, but most were arranged either by family-name or by place-name; they remain arranged and catalogued in that way.

The document in question is found within a manuscript volume which Earwaker acquired – exactly when, where and from whom is nowhere recorded and not now known – which had originally been compiled by Sir William Brereton (1604-61) of Handforth. Born into a cadet branch of the Cheshire Breretons, Sir William became an active businessman and magistrate during the 1630s, one of the county's MPs in the Long Parliament and its Rump, a firm parliamentarian from the outbreak of the civil war and both the parliamentarian commander-in-chief in Cheshire and the county boss for most of the civil war. However, Brereton's political career waned during the mid and later 1650s and his links with Cheshire also weakened, for he spent much of his time at a property he had acquired in Croydon, Surrey – he became an active magistrate in Surrey during the 1650s and he died there shortly after the Restoration – and he failed to secure a seat in either of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate parliaments.¹⁰ A prolific letter-writer, compiler and correspondent, Brereton's surviving letter-books, in essence copy-books into which he had entered and thus preserved the texts of letters which he sent or received, other correspondence which he saw and which passed through his hands, and various other documents, are a major source for the civil war in Cheshire and neighbouring counties during the closing stage of the main conflict; calendars of them have been published in recent years.¹¹ The volume acquired at some stage by Earwaker and now held by the Cheshire Record Office is broadly similar in nature, though in terms of the subject matter and the dates of the various documents copied into it, it ranges much more widely than the more military letter-books which Brereton maintained during 1645-46 while on active campaign.¹²

It takes the form of a paper volume within soft leather covers and binding, into which Brereton either copied himself or had copied by clerks and servants – the texts are in at least three different hands – two runs of documents. Entering the volume from one cover, onto the outer face of

which a much later label has been stuck identifying the contents, apparently in an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century hand, as ‘Miscellaneous collections made by Sir William Brereton Bart. (of Handforth and Chester), c. 1636’, there are 116 pages on which have been copied and preserved the texts of assorted agreements, indentures, precedents, petitions, depositions and similar documents relating to a fierce legal dispute of the 1630s provoked by Brereton’s creation of a duck decoy on land he held close to Chester. Turning the volume over and entering it from the other cover, the outer face of which carries a very faint and now largely illegible list of the contents of the volume as they run in this direction, apparently written in a seventeenth-century hand, the documents copied over the following 53 pages are far more varied. They include a few more items relevant to the duck decoy dispute, documents relating to Brereton’s work as a magistrate in Cheshire during the 1630s and in Surrey during the 1650s, texts of letters about private, family or personal business, a copy of the will of John Hampden of Buckinghamshire of 1636, an account of 1643 showing how the goods captured when Eccleshall Castle in Staffordshire fell to parliament were disposed of, the text of parliament’s war-time instructions to Brereton, documents of the mid 1650s about Brereton’s claim to land in County Armagh and his unsuccessful attempt to secure one of the Cheshire county seats in the election to the second Protectorate parliament in summer 1656, some doggerel verse and a copy of Sir Randall Brereton’s patent to be chamberlain of Chester. These are all fair copies of the texts of assorted letters, papers and other documents, not the originals themselves, and it is noticeable that they have not been copied into the volume in a chronological or logical sequence. For example, texts of the mid 1650s about Brereton’s claims to Irish land are followed by parliament’s war-time instructions to him of 1643, by a note of a property settlement in Croydon in 1651 and then by a Cheshire administrative document of 1635, followed by a trio of texts about the summer 1656 Cheshire parliamentary election and then a note of how Brereton had been assigned lodgings in Whitehall in December 1651. There is no obvious order to the documents, which range backwards and forwards in date from the early 1630s to the late 1650s. On the other hand, the nature and contents of the documents copied into the volume, as well as several notes added in the margins or at the foot of the main entries, confirm that it was being compiled by, or for, Sir William Brereton.

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After his failure to secure a seat in the second Protectorate parliament, the ensuing history and actions of that parliament are largely ignored in Brereton's copy-book. However, for some reason and without any elucidation or further comment – no marginalia or explanations are attached to them – the volume contains the texts of two of Cromwell's speeches of the opening months of 1657 reflecting on parliament's actions. One is merely a copy of a widely-available text of the speech which Cromwell gave to the House of Commons on 31 March when presented with the revised and agreed version of the Remonstrance, renamed the Humble Petition and Advice.¹³ The second is far more important and revealing. Headed 'Heads of the Speech made by O.P. to the Grandees of the Army in February 1656' and thus adopting the Old Style calendar for the year date under which New Year's day fell on 25 March and not 1 January, it summarises the contents of the speech of 27 February 1657 in nine numbered points. We know that several summaries of Cromwell's speech to the officers were swiftly prepared and circulated. Writing to Henry Cromwell on 3 March, Jephson noted that 'many particulars of his Highnesse[']s speech to them I have written to Munne Temple (which I thought too long to trouble your lordship withal) who will acquaint your lordship with them, if you have them not more exactly from other hands; from honest Downing I had them, who was by and heard them'.¹⁴ Thus the parliamentary officer and politician George Downing had been present and was conveying verbal or written summaries of the speech to others, while Jephson had himself drawn up a written summary and had sent it to Edmund Temple, a parliamentary officer then serving in Ireland, expecting him to convey it to Henry. When he wrote to Henry Cromwell on 3 March and to George Monck on the 5th, Thurloe noted that he assumed that the recipients had already received reports about developments in parliament and concerning the Remonstrance in general and about the officers' meetings in particular, and that he did not need to go into great detail on those matters.¹⁵ It is possible, therefore, that the text copied into Brereton's volume was taken from one of these summaries which – over and above the Morgan, anonymous and Mabbott versions – were written up and circulating in the days immediately after the event.

The Brereton version reads as follows, with spelling, the (very limited) punctuation and the irregular use of upper case rendered as in the original:

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1. That the Government as now is too weake to secure our Rights as men and Libertyes as Christians.
2. That the present Parliament had done such things that they were to be preferred before the old Parliament and much before the five moneths Parliament in that they had made an Act against Charles Stewarts Family And one for his Preservation.
3. That there is an absolute necessity to have somthing to Ballance the Representatives of the people who for the present have the power of king, Lords and Commons.
4. That as the Constitutions of Parliaments are now they are soe unlimitedly Arbitrary that they are of a Destructive Tendency though he is perswaded that the present Parliament will not Exercise any such power for the heart of the publique.
5. That if the present Parliament should offer anythinge further Concerning the Government of the Nation if he thought it would be for the better being of things he would accept it.
6. That though he can Deny himselfe in the publique use of Indifferent things, as the Eating of Meates, the playing at Cards and Dice rather then offend the Saints yet in things that are of Concernment to the publique in his Judgment he could Act in them though he offend all the Saints in England and not to doe it for feare of offending them was weake lowe and Childishe.
7. That we must not thinke as if all Saintshippe did rest in Anabaptisme Independency and Presbiterianisme for that there were in England many Thousands knowne by the name of Protestants that if they were Called to it would Carry a Faggott to be burned And that the Protestant Churches in France and Germany were more Considerable then the Professors in these three Nations and were high in Gods account and ought to be soe in ours.
8. That he had been long perswaded of the Shortnes and defects of the present Government and had prest the Councill over and over and tenne tymes to that That the Government might be mended before the Parliament sate.
9. That for him to amend the Government without Parliament was to perjure himselfe and might for it be justly kicked upon the breech and sent home.¹⁶

Again, we are clearly being given a summary of the speech, albeit in this case expressed in numbered points rather than via continuous prose, and there is no pretence to it being any sort of word-for-word reproduction. Once again, however, and perhaps rather more often than in the Morgan or anonymous versions, we appear to be given some quite distinctive, perhaps Cromwellian, turns of phrase here, which might reflect and reproduce some of Cromwell's own words. There are also some points and phrases in this Brereton version which are familiar from, and which largely replicate, points made in the far better known detailed summaries already reproduced and examined. But there is much here which is completely new and unfamiliar and which does not appear in, or even relate to, any of the other summaries of the speech of 27 February. This version gives no impression that the speech comprised, or was built around, a chronological summary of key constitutional changes and blunders of the period 1653-57 and a selective political narrative of those years. Equally, while this version retains a sense that the existing constitution, the Instrument of Government, was being criticised in places and its defects highlighted, and while it puts into Cromwell's mouth some fairly blunt and forceful points, it omits all criticism of the army and of the officers. One of the key strands in the Morgan and anonymous versions, also found to a lesser extent in the Mabbott account – that the officers were responsible for a series of key political and constitutional blunders and miscalculations of the period 1653-57 and had several times forced a reluctant and uncertain Cromwell into agreeing things which turned out to be serious mistakes – is entirely absent from this version. One wonders whether it had been consciously prepared for military consumption and had been skewed or edited to make a case for constitutional reform, as well as on behalf of the Protector's stance and Protectoral policies, while dropping all overt criticism of the army in order to avoid antagonising the military. We know that in the immediate aftermath of Cromwell's speech, the army officers were somewhat subdued, not so much because they were somehow charmed by the Protector's loving and kind expressions, as Thurloe suggested, but rather because they were taken aback by the force and ferocity of his response. Several contemporaries noted how, in response, they had expressed their support for and loyalty to Cromwell and their willingness to abide by what he felt would be best, with the Protector responding in a similarly emollient manner.¹⁷ Although there is no other evidence to support the suggestion, it is perhaps possible that the text which came Brereton's way was a revised and rewritten summary of

the speech put out after the rapprochement between the military and the Protector, from which Cromwell's criticisms of the officers had been expunged in order to let sleeping dogs lie and to prevent provoking renewed animosity.

Although very different from all the other summaries and accounts of the speech, both the title of this Brereton summary and some of the numbered contents make it clear that we are dealing with another version of Cromwell's speech to the officers of 27 February 1657. The ninth point clearly equates to, and explicitly repeats, part of the wording of Morgan's 'I am sworne not to suffer it [the Instrument] to be altered but by parliament, and then you might have given me a kick on the breech and turne me going', which comes around mid-way in that version. The first point clearly equates to Morgan's 'it [the Instrument] proved an imperfect thing which will neither preserve our religious or civill rights', which comes around a third of the way through that version. The third point equates to the need to balance and restrain the House of Commons, which appears close to the end of both the Morgan and anonymous versions, though it is worded slightly differently, and while in the Morgan and anonymous versions it is closely tied to discussion of parliament's harsh treatment of Naylor, the Naylor case is not explicitly mentioned or even really alluded to in the Brereton version; the closest the Brereton version comes to this is the reference to the unlimited, arbitrary and destructive tendencies of parliaments (in the plural and so in general) referred to in the fourth point. The fifth point broadly equates to Morgan's 'if they [the sitting MPs] doe good things I must and will stand by them', which comes around two-thirds of the way through that version, though in Morgan's summary the possible positive work of the sitting parliament is not linked so explicitly to constitutional revision. The overall thrust of the fourth point is also present in both the Morgan and anonymous versions, while not expressed there so clearly or in these words and phrases, and the key message of the eighth point, that Cromwell had long been aware of the defects of the Instrument, also appears in both the Morgan and anonymous versions. So part or all of a little over half the points contained in the Brereton version can be found within and be mapped onto either the Morgan version or both the Morgan and anonymous versions, sometimes very closely and employing the same general language and specific words and phrases, sometimes more broadly and less tightly or only in part. However, the order in which these points

appear in the Brereton version is completely different from the order in which they appear in the Morgan and anonymous versions and in this respect the text seen and copied by Brereton seems to bear no relation to the other summaries. But more importantly, just as large parts of the Morgan, anonymous and Mabbott versions have no equivalents in the Brereton summary and are entirely omitted there, so around half the material found in Brereton has no close or even rough equivalents in any of the other, better-known versions on which historians have hitherto relied. It appears to be entirely new material and to be giving new insights into what Cromwell said. What do we learn?

While Cromwell broadly praises the second Protectorate parliament and the sitting MPs in the better-known versions, in the second point of the Brereton version he is far more explicit and goes further in saying that he prefers the second Protectorate parliament to both the ‘old Parliament’ – either the Long Parliament or the Nominated Assembly – and the ‘five moneths Parliament’ – that is, the first Protectorate parliament, which Cromwell had dissolved at the first opportunity after it had sat barely five lunar months. The reasons he gives for this are also entirely new, praising their legislative record in passing Acts against the Stuarts and for the preservation of the Protector – references to the ‘Act for renouncing and disannulling the pretended title of Charles Stuart, etc’ and the ‘Act for the security of his Highness the Lord Protector, his person, and continuance of the nation in peace and safety’, both of them passed on 27 November 1656.¹⁸ Perhaps here Cromwell was picking up on, responding to and rebutting the criticism made by the officers in their speech, attacking the parliament and its constitutional proposal for being ‘hazardous to his own [Cromwell’s] person, and of great danger to the three nations; such an assumption making way for Charles Steward to come in again’.¹⁹ Also new is the assertion in the fourth point where, having noted that the existing constitution created unlimited, arbitrary and possibly destructive parliaments, Cromwell goes on to say that he is confident that the sitting parliament would not ‘Exercise any such power for the heart [i.e. hurt] of the publique’. Nothing even broadly similar appears in any of the other versions of the speech. The appearance of the word ‘heart’ meaning ‘hurt’ may point to a slip of the pen or a misreading of the original document as it was being copied and entered into Brereton’s copy-book, but given the very variable way in which words might be rendered and spelled in the mid

seventeenth-century, including in ways which would not seem even phonetic to our ears, it might be wise not to read too much into this.

Although the general issues Cromwell highlights in the sixth and seventh points broadly, or closely, follow arguments he presented in other speeches to parliament and to different audiences during the 1650s, they have no equivalents in the other surviving versions of the speech of 27 February. Despite his support for moral reform and godly reformation, Cromwell repeatedly demonstrated in words and in actions that he was not tied to the religious radicals or particular sects, that he was not bound to follow the policies they favoured and that public policy would be decided on broader grounds, even if those decisions did not accord with the outlooks of some religious radicals and sects or perhaps offended them. Equally, on many occasions Cromwell made clear that he did not feel that the true faith resided in specific religious groups and denominations alone and was exclusive to them' and that instead there was a much broader Protestant community in England favoured by God and willing to serve Him and to suffer for the Lord, prepared to sacrifice their lives in His service, 'to carry a faggot' to their own death as a sign of their renunciation of heresy and support for true godliness. The second half of point seven, praising the strength and vibrancy of Protestants and Protestantism in France and Germany and the respect they deserve, may simply be continuing the purely religious theme with which point seven opens. However, it may also tangentially relate to a theme which Cromwell had addressed on other occasions, most notably in the speech with which he opened the second Protectorate parliament in mid-September 1656. In that speech, he defended the foreign policy upon which he and his Protectoral council had embarked during 1655, leading to war with Catholic Spain but an alliance with Catholic France, stressing the importance and vibrancy of the French Protestants, the obligation of the Protectoral government to support them and the way in which the Catholic French government was according them considerable rights and liberties.

Finally, while Cromwell's assertion in the eighth point that he had long been aware of the defects and shortcomings of the Instrument of Government is replicated in the other, better-known versions of the speech, here he goes on to claim that he had 'over and over and ten tymes' – a typically Cromwellian phrase, echoed in several other speeches – pressed his council

to mend or amend the constitution before the parliament assembled and began sitting – presumably a reference to the meeting of the second Protectorate parliament in September 1656, though just possibly to the meeting of the first Protectorate parliament in September 1654. One of the failures of the Instrument of Government was that it did not include any provision for its own and for constitutional revision, whether by the Protector, the permanent executive council or parliament; indeed, clause XXIV of the Instrument specifically barred the passing of any parliamentary bills which ran counter to the existing constitution. In practice, in autumn 1654 Cromwell made clear that he believed parliament did have a right to bring forward constitutional amendments, provided certain fundamental arrangements were accepted and preserved, and in several versions of the speech of 27 February he implies or states that parliament – but only parliament – had the right to revise the written constitution, while stressing that as Protector he could not do so. Yet in the penultimate point of the Brereton version he is suggesting that he had repeatedly urged his Protectoral council to put in place constitutional amendments at some point before September 1656. Under clause XXX of the Instrument the council had temporary power, down to September 1654, ‘to make laws and ordinances for the peace and welfare of these nations where it shall be necessary, which shall be binding and in force, until order shall be taken in parliament concerning the same’, though it would be greatly stretching a point to interpret this as extending to revising the constitution itself. On what grounds Cromwell might have suggested that the council had power to revise the constitution in 1655-56, and to what clause of the Instrument he was looking to give the council authority to act in this way, are not at all clear.²⁰

At least in the penultimate point of the Brereton version Cromwell highlights the role and power of the Protectoral council, a body which is otherwise overlooked in the other versions of the speech of 27 February. Using a variety of evidence, but especially the better-known versions of this speech, some historians have recently argued that the conciliar restraints placed upon the Protector by the Instrument and the powers accorded the council under the constitution were empty and ineffective, and that in reality the Protectoral council was a fairly toothless body, in practice an administrative drone but with no significant powers in government and no real restraint on the actions and authority of Cromwell.²¹ Even though we

have not seen a full return to the old images of Protector Cromwell as a military dictator and of the Protectorate as a military dictatorship, some historians recently seem to be drifting in that general direction, dismissing the constitutional and conciliar limitations placed upon the Protector, exalting the power and control of Lord Protector Cromwell acting alone and arguing that the only real restraints upon him were exercised by the senior army officers, who effectively influenced or even determined key policy decisions during the Protectorate. The well-known versions of Cromwell's speech of 27 February provide grist to this mill, as they completely ignore the council, have Cromwell claiming that almost all the key domestic political initiatives and constitutional developments were decided by the army officers, and that on several occasions he had been overwhelmed by military pressure and forced down certain paths against his will. In reality, and despite what the Morgan and anonymous versions have Cromwell saying on 27 February, there is ample evidence that certain policies, especially the limited pre-session exclusion of MPs from the first Protectorate parliament and the far more extensive exclusions from the second Protectorate parliament, were initiated, advanced, determined and executed by the Protectoral council, precisely as the Instrument set out, and that although senior army officers probably or certainly were consulted about other initiatives, including the establishment of the system of the Major-Generals and the decision to summon the second Protectorate parliament, the Protectoral council was heavily involved in those decisions and processes – for example, the detailed instructions which empowered the Major-Generals and which directed their work and activities were drafted, repeatedly redrafted, extensively revised and eventually finalised by the council, not by the army officers (other than the handful who had a say by dint of their seats on council) or by any other military body. Historians who take this more constitutionalist line point not only to conciliar and other contemporary governmental sources to demonstrate the reality of the constitutional checks and balances placed upon Cromwell and the role of the council in this, but also to other speeches and recorded utterances of the Protector in which he notes or highlights conciliar restraints; they argue that in this speech Cromwell at least partly lost control and in his anger ascribed to the army officers decisions, policy developments and powers which in reality were certainly or probably determined and exercised by the council.²² The Brereton version of the 27 February speech, which omits the claims of army influence and which instead has Cromwell looking to the Protectoral

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council to effect constitutional revision and repeatedly, though unsuccessfully, urging it to action in this area, may serve, at least in a modest way, to enhance the interpretation of the council as a serious body at the heart of government, as well as to put the constitutionalist image of Protector and Protectorate back on its pedestal.

This exploration of the Brereton version of Cromwell's speech of 27 February 1657 has been in part a tale of uncertainties, unanswered questions and loose ends. Most obviously, like the anonymous version, the text survives only as a copy entered into a copy-book, so we know nothing about the original source, how Brereton gained access to it and exactly when he took a copy. Brereton retained some links with, and property in, Chester and Cheshire during the 1650s and Chester was certainly on the main route for letters and papers being sent to Henry Cromwell in Dublin, so one possibility might be that Brereton or one of his contacts in and around Chester got sight of one of the summaries which we know were sent to Henry shortly after 27 February – though this is very speculative and probably pushes speculation too far. With little more to work from, what can we conclude about the overall veracity and reliability of this version of the speech? The four main reasons for giving credence to the better-known Morgan and anonymous versions, listed and discussed earlier in this article, still hold true and are not significantly weakened or undermined by the Brereton version – indeed, the appearance within the Brereton text of several points made in the better-known summaries serves to strengthen their credibility. But by the same token, unless we are to dismiss the Brereton text as completely garbled or made up, or as an assemblage of points made in a range of quite different speeches by Cromwell in the course of the Protectorate – which seems unlikely, especially as points which replicate aspects of the Morgan and anonymous versions appear as the first and the last, as well as within several other, of the nine numbered headings of the Brereton summary – that commonality also gives added credence to the Brereton version. This holds true despite its evident and stark differences from the Morgan and anonymous summaries – most importantly, the complete omission of any sense not only that Cromwell was identifying the army officers as the driving force behind key political and constitutional decisions and was blaming them for mistakes and miscalculations, and also that his speech was built around a selective narrative of events 1653-57. It does not follow that all Cromwell's

arguments should be taken at face value – just as strong contemporary evidence suggests that some of the political decisions and initiatives which Cromwell ascribes to the army officers in the Morgan and anonymous versions were, in reality, taken by other bodies, especially the Protectoral council; so some of his assertions in the Brereton version, perhaps most notably his claim to have repeatedly, though unsuccessfully, urged his council to amend the constitution, may have been special pleading further to explain and to excuse his own failure to act. However, the tone and content of the Brereton version suggest that Cromwell's speech of 27 February was more balanced and subtle than the Morgan and anonymous versions indicate, and comprised much more than a narrow and angry rant about the misguided and malign influence of the army officers in political and constitutional developments over the previous four years or so. Further, it indicates that Cromwell ranged quite widely and explored more issues than the far better-known summaries have led us to believe and that on 27 February he introduced, discussed and defended a broader array of policies and policy areas. Last but by no means least, despite all the work on Cromwell and the assembling by Carlyle, Abbott and others of the texts and other accounts of Cromwell's letters and speeches, this research demonstrates that there are further discoveries still to be made. As in this case, they may be quite modest and far from revolutionary or revelatory in what they reveal, but – like the Brereton version – they all help to throw further or fresh light on Cromwell. How much more is still lurking in county records offices, archives and manuscript collections, not clearly or separately identified in any paper or electronic catalogue, as yet unnoticed by the reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission and by the National Register of Archives, yet to be discovered by an astute or lucky researcher? Good hunting!

- ¹ J.T. Rutt, ed., *Diary of Thomas Burton, Esquire* (4 vols, London, 1828), I, p. 382.
- ² P. Gaunt, ed., *The Correspondence of Henry Cromwell* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 213.
- ³ British Library, Lansdowne Ms 821, ff. 314-15, transcribed and reproduced in Gaunt, *Henry Cromwell*, pp. 215-16.
- ⁴ Word repeated in error.

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- ⁵ British Library, Additional Ms 6125, ff. 74-75, transcribed and reproduced in both Rutt, *Burton's Diary*, I, pp. 382-84 and, with minor variations, in C.L. Stainer, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1901), pp. 262-64.
- ⁶ Stainer, *Speeches*, p. 264.
- ⁷ Gaunt, *Henry Cromwell*, p. 213; T. Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esquire* (7 vols, London, 1742), VI, p. 93; C.H. Firth, ed., *The Clarke Papers* (4 vols, London, 1891-1901), III, pp. 93-94.
- ⁸ Firth, *Clarke Papers*, III, pp. 92-93.
- ⁹ C.W. Sutton and A.G. Crosby, 'Earwaker, John Parsons (1847-1895)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.
- ¹⁰ John Morrill, 'Brereton, Sir William, first baronet (1604-1661)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.
- ¹¹ R.N. Dore, ed., *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton* (2 vols, Stroud, 1984-90) and I. Carr and I. Atherton, eds, *The Civil War in Staffordshire in the Spring of 1646: Sir William Brereton's Letter Book, April-May 1646* (Stafford, 2007).
- ¹² It is to be found at Cheshire Record Office, ZCR 63/2/702.
- ¹³ Stainer, *Speeches*, no. 38, pp. 264-68.
- ¹⁴ Gaunt, *Henry Cromwell*, pp. 213-14.
- ¹⁵ Birch, *Thurloe State Papers*, VI, p. 93; Firth, *Clarke Papers*, III, p. 93.
- ¹⁶ Cheshire Record Office, ZCR 63/2/702, p. 46. The volume contains two separate sequences of page numbers, starting at each end of the volume and running through the pages covered by text; there are a couple of pages left blank and unnumbered, separating the two runs and textual sequences.
- ¹⁷ Gaunt, *Henry Cromwell*, pp. 214, 217; Firth, *Clarke Papers*, III, pp. 94-96.
- ¹⁸ C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (3 vols, London, 1911), II, pp. 1036-42.
- ¹⁹ Rutt, *Burton's Diary*, I, p. 382.
- ²⁰ For the text of the Instrument of Government, see S.R. Gardiner, *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1906), pp. 405-17 and the Association's web-site at www.olivercromwell.org, under 'Issues and analysis' > 'The Protectorate', which places the text in a wider context and analyses it.
- ²¹ See, for example, B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell and the council', in P. Little, ed., *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), a significantly

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revised and expanded version of which appeared in B. Worden, *God's Instruments. Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 2012), chapter 5, 'Cromwell and his councillors'.

- ²² See P. Gaunt, 'The Councils of the Protectorate, from December 1653 to September 1658' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 1983) and P. Gaunt, "'The Single Person's confidants and dependants'?: Oliver Cromwell and his Protectoral councillors', *Historical Journal*, 32 (1989).

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